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The Cover Picture. The University of Pennsylvania was organized originally in the Academy Building, Philadelphia, which was erected for the use of Whitefield's evangelistic preaching. In memory of this fact, the present statue of Whitefield is to be placed on University grounds, Commencement Day, 1919.

American Notes. **A Noble Tribute to the Moral Supremacy of Christ** in the New York *Nation* is as gratifying as unexpected when one recalls the dreary agnosticism of Mr. Godkin, the Ulster minister's son, who for years hardened the hearts of the *Nation's* reading constituency. The writer acknowledges without qualification that all solutions of public and international questions must be tested by the standards set by Jesus.

"Our great adventure of the past year, its outcome, our motives and methods and expectations must finally, beyond even the verdict of history which is the last hope of the statesman-politician, be submitted to the verdict of Jesus, and meet the measure of His Gospel. . . . . This certainly has neither less nor more theological bearing than the certainty that fundamental problems in physics must finally be submitted to the authority of Newton. The collective experience of the race has shown that the physical order of the universe is as Newton said it was. His guidance is trustworthy. Those who accept it go right, and those who refuse it go wrong, and sooner or later come to grief. Collective experience has shown, too, that the moral order of the universe is as Jesus said, and that the way to keep safely and successfully in with it is the way He indicated. . . . . Observers report from all over the world the curious quickening of the Messianic expectation. In Russia, in the Central Empires, in Britain, in Italy and the Danubian States they hear the whisper, 'Christ is coming.' . . . . The best possible use of this Christmas season is to make sure that we can abide the day of His coming."

That the Movement for Protection of Women under International Law should, in its American development, be launched in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, is historically appropriate as is also the fact that the leader, Mrs. W. C. Beecher, should be a connection of the great pulpit tribune of the last generation. In response to an appeal of the women of France, American women have organized committees and petitions to the Peace Congress, first, that such international action be taken as shall safeguard women in the future from what they have suffered in the four years past from the lecherous soldiery of Germany; secondly, that the miscreants in the German army who have committed so many nameless crimes be brought to answer before some adequate tribunal. If anyone cares to be stirred to the depths, let him read in the current *Blackwood's* an article by a woman to women on these incredible outrages on women. Thousands of French and Belgian women have been made syphilitic wrecks, tens of thousands burdened with German offspring and the noble womanhood of the occupied territories has been oppressed and humiliated in greater or less degree. Mme. Avril de Sainte Croix, a speaker of power, has been addressing American women in behalf of her French sisters. Those wishing to coöperate in this movement can get information from the Committee for Protection of Women under International Law, Eagle Building, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The Plan of the International Reform Bureau of Placing the Ten Commandments in schools, factories and courthouses is meeting with wide approval. Mr. Claxton, the United States Commissioner of Education, declares that a good service will be done to the country, if they are put in schoolrooms everywhere. A fine bronze tablet with the Commandments is now on the outside wall of the Pittsburgh Court House. The placing of the Commandment charts in the schools of the city of Washington has been authorized by the school committee. Dr. Daniel, Vice President of the Board, in recommending this action said:

"The principle of advertising is the constant flashing before the eye of the same thing. I have no doubt but that if the children in the schools can get a daily impression of this the greatest moral code, it will be good for them."

The Great Debate at Silver Lake, New Jersey, between the Rev. B. Pascale, an Italian Baptist, and Professor De Maria, a Roman Catholic, was attended by over 2000 people. The subject was "Which is the True Church?" The discussion was taken down stenographically, and is now published in pamphlet form, much to the dissatisfaction of the Roman Catholic clergyman, who is evidently conscious of the weakness of his general position.

Mr. Thomas Hastings, of Hastings, Carrère & Co., architects, who designs the Arch of Victory for New York, is a son of the manse. His father was president of Union Theological Seminary, and his grandfather, Thomas Hastings, a writer of hymns still widely sung in Protestant churches, among them "Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned upon the Saviour's Brow." Messrs. Hastings and Carrère were the designers of the New York Public Library and other notable buildings. Another minister's boy who has been much in the public eye lately is Mr. A. Bruce Bielaski, of the Department of Justice, who has been laying bare with remorseless hand, before the Senatorial Investigating Committee, the intrigues of brewers and German propagandists. His father is a Methodist pastor in Maryland, Dr. Alexander Bielaski, and he himself is an active member of the Methodist Church at Chevy Chase, and chairman of its board of trustees.

Mr. John W. Day, Who Served as a Y. M. C. A. Secretary at Camp Zachary Taylor, is, we take it, a Unitarian. He writes in the *Christian Register* (Unitarian) various reflections suggested by his camp experiences. Prayer to Christ he reprobates.

"To hear a man, however sincere and earnest his piety, pray to Jesus . . . . is to feel a real shock. It is not *at* the name of Jesus that every knee should bow, but *in* the name of Jesus, to God alone."

But we have not so learned Christ nor did Paul so write.

The editor of the *Register* congratulates Unitarians on finding entrance into Christian organizations whose theology they never tire of attacking.

"We are happy to say that when not directly challenged no questions are asked in these eventful days and members of the outcast churches (*i.e.*, Unitarians, etc.) are allowed to work at home and abroad under the banners of the Churches of Christ in America."

There is a Prosperous Chinese Colony in Panama with extensive business interests, and a strong branch of the Chinese National League. Some months ago it invited Miss Evelyn Miller, a Methodist missionary teacher, to organize and grade a model school for Chinese children, which was done. When the time of her departure to the United States came they insisted that another teacher of the same mission be sent them. "We want no other kind. We see that the missionary teacher loves the children and can do something for them that no teacher can do who teaches merely for money." So one was promised on condition that she be allowed to operate a Sunday school alongside of her day school. The Chinese agreed, hired a room, secured the seats, collected the children and set it agoing before the mission knew what was happening. Evidently American Methodism has an opening for educational work among the Chinese in Panama similar to that which has been so greatly successful among the same Chinese merchant class in Singapore.

Latin American Notes. Dr. W. E. Browning of the Committee on Coöperation in Latin America has been **prospecting in South America in behalf of Christian education.** He finds men in authority everywhere favorable. Ex-President Schearer of Paraguay, who is slated for the presidency again,—himself a Roman Catholic,—promised to send his three children to an Evangelical school as soon as it could be opened. The Paraguayan Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Ayala, said, "We need you here and are disposed to help you in any way possible." This was the invariable attitude of Paraguayan congressmen, judges, professors. Dr. Perez, Secretary of Public In-

struction, promises his help in securing the site for the school on advantageous terms. Dr. Browning met in the little city of Cochabamba, Bolivia, some twelve men who had received their education in the Institutio Ingles at Santiago, Chile. They were teachers, bankers, large farmers, business men,—the most influential men of the place, and all had made good, morally and materially.

Race Prejudice is an Evil Which Has Many Distressing Consequences. Mr. Onderdonk of the Texas-Mexican Mission says that it prejudices the people of Mexico against Americans and discredits American Protestantism. He mentions the case of the Mexican consul at New Orleans, Mr. Velasquez, who was some time ago refused a sleeper in a Pullman because these were being saved for "white people." The incident was of course officially reported to the Mexican Government.

"And this is the country from which Protestantism comes! This is the superior religion that they would impose on us," is the comment of the Mexicans upon such incidents.

Mr. Fritts of the Congregational Mission in Mexico describes the crowded auditorium of the Gante Street Church in Mexico City during the last Regional Conference. "At one session a trained chorus of sixty voices **sang 'The Hallelujah Chorus'** and **'The Heavens Are Telling'** as I have scarcely ever heard them sung. The leading soprano of this splendid chorus is the wife of the governor of one of Mexico's greatest states, which ought to convince the most skeptical that the despised Evangelicals are beginning to arrive."

The Mexican Baptist Church of San Antonio, Texas, was founded by Dr. W. D. Powell, a minister of great spiritual gifts, well known in the South. During many years it led a precarious existence, at times almost to the point of extinction, because of the lack of proper pastoring. Now, however, it is manned by two of the most admirably equipped pastors preaching anywhere to Mexicans. The Rev. Felix Bouldain is a Spaniard of French extraction. He was educated as a Roman Catholic clergyman, traveled extensively in European and Latin countries on special papal missions, for eleven years was in the priesthood and finally was converted to Christ by a conscientious study of his Latin Bible. He first entered the pastorate in San Antonio in 1912. His influence among the Mexicans of prominence in the Mexican colony of 45,000 of that city is very great. At present he is engaged in the preparation of an exposition of the Bible which because of his exceptional knowledge and training promises to rank with the most valuable Bible literature in Spanish. Mr. Bouldain's assistant is Mr. M. C. Garcia, orator and scholar, formerly superintendent of public education in the State of Chihuahua and consul at El Paso during Maduro's presidency. Mr. Garcia was driven into free thought in a reaction from the corruption of Romanism, but was converted under Mr. Bouldain's ministry.

A Great Figure in the Y. M. C. A. By the death of Mr. James Stokes the Y. M. C. A., both American and International, loses one of its outstanding figures. For fifty years his heart and head and purse were at the disposal of young men's work. He belonged to that rare group which laid the Association's foundations broad and deep in the seventies,—his cousin, William E. Dodge, Robert McBurney, T. L. Cuyler, D. L. Moody and Cornelius Vanderbilt. The Railroad Department had his early interest, and the student work. Secretaries who fell sick or needed vacations or were in financial difficulty, were sought out by him and helped in practical ways. But it was in the European extension that he accomplished his preëminent success. The Association buildings in Paris, Rome and Petrograd were his gifts. By his will the bulk of his estate (exceeding $2,000,000) is bequeathed to the James Stokes Society to sustain and advance the work for young men in Petrograd, Rome and Paris. Mr. Stokes was a man of prayer and loyal to evangelical truths, believing that the roots of all such work were necessarily evangelical, and that any departure from evangelical standards meant decay and death. In his will he expressly stated his desire

"that the work for which the fund is hereby created shall be consecrated to and used

for the furtherance of the Christian doctrines of the complete atonement for sin through the blood of Jesus Christ once offered, and that secretaries and teachers may be selected who are sound in the faith, believing in the Divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, the trinity and the deity of Christ."

To the Law and the Testimony. Theological uncertainty in Baptist seminaries is causing increasing restiveness in the general Baptist constituency. The Rev. Samuel M. Lindsey, of Brooklyn, asks in the *Watchman-Examiner* that these seminaries state definitely the teaching which their faculties stand for on such central matters as the Inspiration and Authority of Scriptures, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the Sacrifice of Christ in Relation to the Salvation of Men, the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, the Second Coming of Christ, etc. This certainly is a fair suggestion. It would, indeed, be an anomalous situation if there were teachers in Baptist theological seminaries preparing men for the Baptist ministry who could not be admitted to the average Baptist Church on confession of faith. The attempt to load new theology of the Rauschenbusch-Soares type upon the Methodist study courses has awakened official protest from conferences in New Jersey, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Montana, Southern California, Puget Sound and elsewhere. The Oregon Conference insists that the commission which has had the matter in hand "has neither given us a better course nor promoted the harmony of the Church." It revolts against the modish overemphasizing of sociology and pedagogy in the choice of literature for study. One writer aptly remarks:

"What our deaconesses need to learn through these studies is not whether there were one, two, or three Isaiahs but where to find in Isaiah the right chapter to read and explain to a dying woman with an unbelieving husband and heartbroken children at her bedside."

A Straight and Ant-Proof Theology. Certainly there are grounds for indignation when things reach such a pass that the Nestor of American theological training, Dr. Augustus H. Strong of Rochester, can charge "the seminaries of almost all our denominations" as being "not so much organs of Christ as of antichrist." He insists that they are depriving the Gospel message of all definiteness and making of students disseminators of doubt.

"The result of such teaching in our seminaries is that the student unless he has had a Pauline experience before he came has all his early conceptions of Scripture and of Christian doctrine weakened, has no longer any positive message to deliver, loses the ardor of his love to Christ and at his graduation leaves the seminary not to become preacher or pastor, but to sow his doubts broadcast as teacher in some college, as editor of some religious journal, as secretary of some Y. M. C. A. or as agent of some mutual insurance company."

Dr. Strong sees in the rise of Bible schools all over the land to take the place of the seminaries a providential movement, but regrets that money given for Christian purposes should be diverted into channels hostile to Evangelical Christianity.

The Bishop of Carlisle Presents a Fresh Angle. For the sake of completeness in the discussion the Commission on World Order might well put among its official publications a recent article in the *Nineteenth Century* on "A League of Churches." In it are many things which are rarely said but which most Christians would assent to as true. Thus:

"It is easy to make a fetish of a false religious unity; the unity of uniformity, of sameness, of devitalized stagnation. . . . . Diversity is not only a sign but a spring of life. The lower a religion the more apparent are its uniformities; the higher a religion the more conspicuous its diversities. The higher it is the more thinking it encourages and stimulates and wherever thinking enters diversity follows. Reunion aiming simply at homogeneity of organization might easily be a retrograde movement, an unhappy return to the imperialistic ecclesiasticism of former ages.

"It is customary to count schism as sin. But are not schisms sometimes sources of salvation? But for the Reformation which is sometimes called a schism what would have become of the religious life and health of Christendom during the last three hundred years?

"Who can tell what would have become of the Anglican Church but for the Nonconformist diversities of Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, Methodism and the like which have surrounded it and infused

something of their freedom and vigor and personal devotion into it?

"No more terrible warning of the perils of ecclesiastical uniformities and institutional formalities could have been given the world than the impotence of the Russian Church to resist the first stroke of anarchic revolt,—a revolt which might probably never have happened if through the wholesome leavening of enthusiastic diversities, the Church of Russia had been the vivifier and illuminator of the people.

Further Comment. "Our divisions as far as they are 'unhappy' spring from the same sort of causes as St. James tells us all our fightings proceed from, *viz.*, the pleasures that war in our members, such as envy and jealousy, lust of preëminence and a covetous determination to maintain a monopoly of God, a delight in exclusiveness born of an egotistic sense of superiority, the satisfaction of our lower human nature in thinking ourselves always right and others who differ from us always wrong. These unhappy divisions are wholly different from legitimate varieties of opinion upon questions of doctrine and discipline such as are natural and inevitable to freedom of thought. These varieties are quite consistent with the law of love. But factious divisions are contrary to that law and consequently oppugnant to the Christ. No League of Churches which is not a league founded on love can ever be a truly Christian league.

"We are ceasing to worship the exclusive divinity of either secular thrones or ecclesiastical chairs and are learning to measure the value of a chair by the worth of its occupant and not the worth of the occupant by the age, however venerable, of his chair. The only true and sure test of men and institutions is that of Christ, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Judged by this test who not a papalist will hazard the opinion that in the present crisis of the world, when the liberties and fellowships of mankind are at stake, the utterances of the lay President of the United States of America have not been more Christlike and apostolic than those of the ecclesiastical President of the Papal Church? No form of transmission can make any man a successor of the apostles unless his temper and teaching be apostolic also."

Exegetical Notes. Mr. Leeder, a writer on modern Egypt, suggests that Ps. lxviii. 13, "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with . . . . gold," refers to the "refuges" for doves, old earthen pots built into Egyptian mud towers and offering a cool retreat to doves in the daytime. These pots become very dirty yet when, toward sunset, the birds come out and fly about, the silver and gold of their feathers shimmer untarnished.

Dr. Reisner Has Excavated the Tombs of the kings of Ethiopia where they rest together as the old French monarchs at St. Denis,—twenty-five black kings and twenty-three queens. The site is Gebel Barkel where Napata the ancient Ethiopic capital once stood. Among the treasures mentioned in the Boston *Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin* is a magnificent life-sized statue of Tirhaqua,—the Tirhakah of Isaiah xxxvii. 9 and 2 Kings xix. 9. This statue is inscribed and its identity is therefore unquestionable. So the historicity of one more Biblical name is fixed.

The Thirteenth Verse of the Fourth Chapter of Hebrews affirms that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." The word used is τραχηλισμένα which the Revised Version translates "laid open." The figure is drawn (according to Mr. G. H. Whittaker in the *Expositor*) from the practice of placing a clog round the necks of condemned criminals to prevent them from hiding their faces from the public gaze as they were led through the streets to execution. Mr. Whittaker fortifies this statement by quotations of analogous passages in Greek and Latin writers and concludes with:

"The use of the word by the writer to the Hebrews shows that the treatment of criminals afforded an obvious way of bringing to men's minds the impotence of guilty men to hide their hearts from 'the eyes of him with whom we have to do.'"

A High Church Advocate of Disestablishment. Father Paul Bull has made public an elaborate statement of his reasons for favoring the disestablishment of the Church of England. The Church, he holds, is enslaved in the following particulars:

1. The nomination of her bishops by a prime minister who may be a Jew or an agnostic, bitterly hostile or contemptuously indifferent to the Christian faith and the Church's welfare and who, in spite of protest, has the legal power to compel chapters to elect them and bishops to consecrate them.

2. The claim of a Parliament—a Noah's ark of varied religions—to exercise complete control over the doctrines and discipline, the formularies and the worship of the Church.
3. The contemptuous refusal of Parliament to allow the Church to reform itself or to take steps which are vital to the full discharge of her Divine mission.
4. The papal despotism of her bishops, who have absorbed every responsibility and right of the presbyter.
5. The impossibility of readjusting the finances of the Church to meet new spiritual needs with the resulting misuse of its immense wealth, so that men who are not familiar with the legal entanglements of the Church regard her as a den of thieves, indifferent to the welfare of souls.

The Reasons for His Conclusions. These seem to rest on a sounder interpretation of the Church history of England than is commonly current in the circles which Father Bull represents and to flow also from the questionable courses of theological liberals in the Establishment. Father Bull insists that

"the attempt to force all men in the nation to conform to the National Church led to cruel persecution which drove half the nation into separation from her communion. On the other hand the attempt to embrace all Englishmen in the National Church has led to concession and compromises which have weakened conviction and loyalty to the truth.

"Is it not better to recognize at once that the Christian Church cannot be national in the all-inclusive sense and to sever our connection with the State? The Catholic Church is by its very nature both larger and smaller than the nation. On the one hand it is, in its very essence, international, a brotherhood which binds together in a Divine family of the twice-born sons of God, men out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people in the worship of God and the Lamb. On the other hand it is inevitably smaller than the nation in that it must depend on the selection of faith and on the persuasion of love."

The theological liberals he calls Bolshevists and describes their operations with accuracy and refreshing frankness.

"Extreme men have for the past thirty years worked steadily to destroy belief in the supernatural aspect of the Christian religion and some have deliberately tried to do this by encouraging those who are unable to believe in the Virgin Birth and physical Resurrection of our Lord to take holy orders in the Established Church in order that they may convert it from within to the abandonment of these articles of the Creed. Their plan of campaign is simple. First they claim absolute freedom of thought for scholars to pursue their researches wherever they may lead them. This is granted gladly as the first duty we owe to Truth. The next step is to claim that this freedom of thought must not be denied to the preachers and to those who hold office in the Church and this is wrongly called liberty of prophesying. . . . . A man of honor if his adverse conclusions seemed likely to be permanent used to resign his teaching office and retire into lay communion or even cease to hold communion with the Church. But this is not the modern way. The modern way is to win security of tenure as an official of the Establishment, to avoid making any positive statement of personal belief and under the protection of the State to attempt to change a creed of Christendom and to make it harmonize with the latest phase of the modern mind.

"Intellectuals are as welcome as the Wise Men to the manger cradle of the Virgin-born Son of God if they come to offer their gifts and to worship but not if they come to mock at the angels' message and the shepherds' faith."

The practical question of the disposition of the Church's endowments Father Bull would solve by sharing a large portion with other communions of Christians. This of course fails to take into account the large mass of men who are outside all churches, and who would seem also to have their claim to national property. Dr. Bull explains that

"when a large portion of the population of England left the South for the North and congregated in vast cities, the rich endowments of the Church were not available to minister to their needs, which were chiefly supplied by the voluntary efforts of the free churches."

He makes the kindly suggestion that certain of the endowments be used for interdenominational theological faculties in the new universities. This he holds "would greatly conciliate our Noncomformist brethren." Certainly such joint theological education has worked well in both Canada and India.

Princeton in Peking. The Princeton University Center in China was organized in 1906, under the able lead of the Rev. Robert R. Gailey, a famous Princeton athlete. It has many original and valuable features which are described

in the *Continent*. Besides its regular staff it has a constant temporary staff of young Princeton graduates who attach themselves to the work for short terms of a year or two. In this way the best type of young Americans come into contact with young Chinese men of the leading classes, form friendships and open the way for future coöperation when they have both entered upon places of influence in their respective countries. The Princeton Center directs and manages the Peking Y. M. C. A., which carries on Bible classes, schools of economics, business method and foreign languages, and the usual activities of athletic and social character. One feature, however, of the Peking Y. M. C. A. which the Princeton men are responsible for is quite unique. This is prison evangelism. There are five prisons in Peking into every one of which the Princeton Center preacher and his teammates have now permission to go. One of these, a large model prison, has its own chapel, and behind the pulpit are portraits of five religious leaders grouped *à la* James Freeman Clarke,—Mohammed, Christ, Confucius, Buddha and Laotse.

"Up to within very recent months priests of all five of these religions were allowed to preach here on successive days,—each man having his own following. But gradually four of the religions died a natural death and now the order has gone out that it is unnecessary for the priests to come any more and an open field has been left for the Christian religion, the only survivor."

Every Tuesday the Princeton evangelist takes with him a team of ten or twelve volunteers who conduct small groups of evangelization among both men and women prisoners. Some have already become Christians and impressed the fact of their conversion upon the wardens by their changed lives. The wardens have asked the Princeton Center to establish an employment bureau for ex-prisoners so that the full indeterminate sentence can be put into operation as soon as possible.

The Center has also established a school service club which draws its membership from the forty-two colleges and high schools in Peking. This club leads its members in various forms of Christian service,—free night schools for servants and other unprivileged persons, the management of a social settlement, etc. This type of activity is novel to Chinese young men of the upper class, and they are at first inclined to look upon participation in it as demeaning to their station, but their attitude gradually changes.

The End of China's Opium Episode. The rugged rectitude of China's President in burning the opium stocks of Shanghai stands out as a shining example of an unvacillating handling of the subject of war prohibition. The smoke of 1200 chests (valued at five million dollars) is the sweetest sacrificial savor to go heavenward since the Tsar relinquished the huge revenues of the *vodka* monopoly. Opposed to President Hsu Shih Chan was a considerable group of officials who hoped to reap financial benefit from the reopened traffic. On the other hand, a great body of leading Chinese citizenship was bitterly opposed to the return of the drug. The four provinces in which it was proposed to recommence sale—Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Chekiang and Hupeh—had determined upon the following measures:

1. If the opium dealer be a shopkeeper all the banks and money shops shall refuse to have anything to do with him in money matters so that he will have to close his shop for lack of funds and banking facilities.
2. If an employee of a shop deals in opium the shopkeeper shall dismiss the man. His name shall be published in the newspapers so that he will not be able to find employment elsewhere.
3. If a wealthy man be discovered dealing in opium his name shall be given to the elder of his family with the request that he be cast out from the family (one of the greatest of disgraces) and he shall, without mercy, be opposed by all as an alien.
4. Landlords shall not rent their houses to opium dealers. If they do they will be dealt with as if they were opium dealers themselves.
5. If damage is done to opium dealers and their properties the Chambers of Commerce shall refuse to grant compensation.

In view of these precautions, it is indeed likely, as Professor Jenks suggests, that the proposed opium syndicate would not have found easy sledding for its business in these provinces.

The Cigarette. Noble as have been the war ministries of the Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross, in one particular these organizations have cut a rather sorry figure,—that of dispensers of cigarettes. Here they have been unintelligent, old-fashioned, reactionary. The cigarette is, as everybody in remote touch with race hygienic study knows, no innocent offspring of My Lady Nicotine, but a poisonous nuisance in a class by itself. Beside it the pipe and the cigar are gentlemanly thoroughbreds. The glycerine which was introduced into the cigarette as a binder and sweetening agent produces in burning, according to the Report of the *London Lancet,* the terrible furfural, an epileptogenic poison which is present in absinthe and gives to this French drink its characteristic dangerousness. This furfural, the *Lancet* tells us, is fifty times as poisonous as ordinary alcohol, causing ataxia, tremors, convulsions and muscular paralysis. The combustion of cigarette paper, according to Mr. Edison, releases the poison acrolein which acts violently on the nerve centers, producing degeneration of the cells of the brain especially in the undeveloped organisms of boys. It is, Mr. Edison continues, one of the most terrible drugs in its effects on the human body.

"We sometimes develop it in our laboratory in our experiments with glycerine. One whiff of it from the oven drove one of my assistants out of the building the other day. I can hardly exaggerate the dangerous nature of acrolein and yet that is what a man or boy is dealing with every time he smokes an ordinary cigarette."

Another poisonous production of cigarette combustion is carbon monoxide (the deadly element in water gas) which passes in large quantities into the delicate lung cells. This gas produces faintness, dizziness, palpitation of the heart and a feeling of great heaviness in feet and legs.

The Young Men's Christian Association could perform no more timely service than that of conducting an intelligent, modern and intensive campaign of instruction on this subject among the men and boys of the nation. It has all the machinery. It alone has all the machinery. It could quickly tone up its standards to the old levels. And in the future it should see to it that out of its horn of plenty never again should pour these little white imps.

Brief Notes from Abroad. **Bishop Paget pays this Tribute to the Character of the Late Dr. Henry Scott Holland:** "He was so high yet so easy to get at; his whole life was a rendering of Christianity into language which we could understand—the language of daily normal work and rest, raising and ennobling, just as the Bible ennobles the common English."

The Czecho-Slovak Colony in London chose to have its public thanksgiving service in honor of the establishment of the Czecho-Slovak Republic in a Protestant rather than a Roman Catholic Church in spite of the fact that the population of the new Republic is predominatingly Romanist. The Crown Court Presbyterian Church was the place of meeting. The order of service included much of the old Hussite music. It is interesting to learn that Miss Masaryk, the daughter of the first president of the Bohemian Republic, is an active member of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain. In a letter to Mr. R. P. Wilder of the Y. M. C. A. she says, speak-of the Czecho-Slovak troops: "We were very glad to hear how our boys in France are receiving the Bible. The Y. M. C. A. is doing very valuable work for our soldiers."

The Bohemians are Roman Catholic,—*for the present.* But they hate the Jesuits, looking upon them as the historical enemies of their nation. They are eager for education. Of the 8439 Czech immigrants coming into the United States in 1912 only 75 were illiterate! It is said that in the schools of the forty northern and eastern counties of Nebraska there are no less than 300 teachers of Czech parentage, some of them being superintendents of schools. The buildings of the state of Illinois at the Panama Exposition in San Francisco were designed by a Czech.

A Belgian Regiment has asked for a Protestant Chaplain as a result of the ministries of Mr. and Mrs. Norton among Belgian soldiers.

The Students' Christian Association in the University of Coimbra, Portugal, has recently dedicated its splendidly equipped

Y. M. C. A. building and dormitory. One hundred and fifty of the thousand students are members. University students in Copenhagen have collected Rs. 10,000 for the erection of a hostel for Hindu students in Tiruvannamalai, India.

The Devotion and Self-Sacrifice of an American Association Secretary at the Front in France so impressed a body of Annamite troops, says the *Revue Hebdomadaire,* that they made him an honorary member of their regiment.

The Waldensians Are Going to Erect as a Memorial to the gallant Waldensian Alpini, fallen in the war, a school and orphanage at Torre Pellice, their center in the Cottian Alps. Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Schalck, English people who have lived long in Italy, an excellent building with ample grounds has been purchased as hostel for Waldensian girls studying in the Normal College. A Waldensian steel merchant has promised all his war profits to the enterprise and has already given £2000 to endow scholarships. Senator Marconi, the inventor, himself a Waldensian, has written his unqualified approval. "No better tribute could be paid the memory of the fallen than to train up a race that will follow their example." It is expected that numbers of the young women here will go into useful work as teachers and governesses, for Waldensian teachers are famous for capacity and character.

A French Bible Was Purchased Last Year by the Secretary of the Bourse du Travial (or Labor Exchange) at Tours from a colporteur of the Bible Society. Since then it has had a prominent place in the library and is read by the workmen. Several have asked to buy copies for themselves, so that the secretary now keeps two or three in stock for sale. A labor orator in Requena, Spain, recently urged his hearers to treat their wives better, to desist from spending their wages in taverns and to read good books, "as for example the Bible," quoting at the same time many sayings from "the Master of Galilee." He had bought the Scriptures from a traveling colporteur.

The Outlook for Roman Catholic Missions is described by a Catholic writer as truly disquieting. Three fourths of the male missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church were French. But France is now able to give little either in men or money. "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith finds during the last four years its receipts lamentably cut down and has no heart to issue a report. The contributions of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Belgium have entirely fallen away. The Association of the Holy Childhood with a yearly income in former years of over $700,000 for foreign missions has seen its receipts cut by half."

The Visit of President Wilson to the Vatican gives rise to various reflections. It has been perilously like a visit to an enemy country, for the Vatican has been anything but neutral in the gigantic struggle of the past four years. In Vatican walls were hatched by Mgr. Gerlach a string of conspiracies, one of which ended in the blowing up of two Italian battleships, the *Benedetto Brin* and the *Leonardo da Vinci.* From the same sources crawled the peace propaganda which culminated in the Caporetto *débâcle.* Men who had fought bravely in the Italian army before the Pope's Note was published stopped fighting because they thought he had so ordered. According to the R. C. *Tablet* the ignorant peasantry were on their knees before the Madonna in thanksgiving for the peace that the Pope had brought,—a peace which they believed would long before have been consummated "if it had not been for that old witch England." The *Civiltà Cattolica,* "the hyena of the Vatican," ceased not to gird at England at every opportunity. In short, the Vatican was, as usual, a spider clot of intrigue,—this time as ever directed against the cause of freedom and justice.

The Great Christian French Composer, César Franck, is very much in vogue in these days of France's tribulation. All Souls' Day, the day of the dead, is one of the most widely observed religious festivals in Paris and other French cities. That of 1917 was made memorable in Notre Dame by the singing of Franck's lovely setting of "The Beatitudes"; in the Grand Palais by the rendition of his oratorio, "Ruth," and of his *"Panis Angelicus."*

Franck was for thirty years the organist of the Church of Ste. Clotilde, the modern Gothic fane with crocketed spires in South Paris which was built in the days of the Second Empire. Of his organ, the creation of the master builder, Cavaillé Col, he was wont to say: "If you knew how I love it. It is so plastic to my fingers; so responsive to my thought." It was with the aid of this instrument that he composed his great oratorio of "The Redemption" which is given yearly at the Church of the Sorbonne. César Franck planned during many years to set the words of our Lord's Beatitudes to music and actually worked ten long years at the task. He sought to make it his *œuvre de toujours.*" Of this divine masterpiece the French critic, M. de Reçy, has said lately in the *Revue Bleue:* "The composition is not only one of the greatest written since Beethoven, but it appears to me to tower over all others of its day."

The Church Congress held in Moscow last October took important steps looking to the revivification of Christian life in the Russian Church. The evangelical Bishop of Ufa earnestly supported the proposal to hold weekly prayer meetings in every one of the thousands of Russian churches. Certainly when Russia gets on her knees there will be great deliverances. The Council unanimously recommended for congregational use a selection of hymns used in England and America and emphasized the desirability of introducing preaching and congregational singing together with a curtailment of the interminable Russian Mass. The more active participation of the laity in church work was also recommended. Christian women were urged to become deaconesses and Scripture readers, visiting the sick and afflicted. It will be a happy day for Russia if along with the political and economic Revolution goes the corrective of a thoroughgoing religious Reformation.

The Methodist Orphange at Mercedes, Argentina, has a good friend, an anonymous giver to good causes, who from time to time has left money for it amounting to $15,000. He is a resident of Buenos Aires and goes by the name of *El Samaritano.* He has the odd (and somewhat careless) way of dropping an envelope containing a thousand dollars into the letter box of a church or of slipping it under the door where the sexton discovers it after some days. *El Samaritano* is described as giving large sums to the present great Centenary movement in the Methodist Church.

The Bread Cast on Chinese Waters by American Christians is Beginning to Float Back. John Mott asked China for $100,000 for the War Work Fund. He has been pledged twelve times that amount,—$1,200,000,—nine tenths of which has been subscribed by native Chinese. The central Government pays $50,000; the provincial Government of Kiangsu $150,000; those of Chile and Shantung $100,000 each; seven cities $100,000 each; and the individual ministries at Peking from $8000 to $10,000. Past investments in famine funds, mission schools and hospitals promise to prove gilt-edged even from the point of view of money.

Chinese Students Swarmed to Tokyo six or eight years ago but after the revolution their number fell off. Twelve months ago there were 2500 there. More recently a fresh movement has set in and at present 5000 are in residence in the Japanese capital alone. Unsettled conditions in China and favorable exchange are given as reasons for this fresh influx. Active Christian work is being carried on among them. Last May about 100 Chinese athletes entered the Far Western Olympics which were held in Tokyo. All of them were accommodated in the hostel of the Tokyo Chinese Y. M. C. A. One of the Chinese churches held a special service and reception for them and presented each with a copy of the New Testament.

The Coöperative Credit Societies Started by the Y. M. C. A. in India to help the Christian natives out of debt now occupy the attention and time of twenty-one secretaries.

"To-day," writes Daniel Swamidoss, one of these rural secretaries, "after four years, we have eighty coöperative banks with a working capital of 100,000 *rupees.* There are 8000 members and 400,000 people are helped through these members."

The Rural Work Department requires the establishment of educational classes in connection with these coöperative credit societies.

Mr. Studd's Watchmen on the Welle. These undershepherds, come up out of the gross heathenism of inner Africa, were lately set apart for their peculiar ministry. The following test questions were put to them:

1. Will you give up the world and set your heart on prayer, and the meditation of God's Word?
2. Will you stand firm and seek to give the Gospel of Jesus to everyone?
3. Will you keep guard over your own heart? Will you protect the Church of God from all evil? Will you help His sheep to walk the right road?
4. Do you believe all God's Book, and will you teach only those things that are in it?
5. Will you cast away your life for God and His flock, and give salvation to all men?
6. Will you disclose evil? Will you cleanse the Church of God with all your might?
7. Will you love all men and give just judgment and treat all tribes alike?
8. Will you not lord it over the Christians, but remain the servant of all men, even as Jesus was?

To each of these questions they answered by raising St. Mark's Gospel in the right hand and saying: "It is so! It is so!"

Then all knelt down and together Mr. Studd and Mr. Buxton laid their hands on each head severally while they said:

"In the Name of God, we, His slaves, appoint you a Watchman of this Church of Christ."

Sunder Singh. The *Bombay Messenger* mentions a new personality who is awakening wide interest in India, a Sadhu, or wandering Sikh preacher named Sunder Singh. He is of wealthy and high caste antecedents, and was educated in an American Presbyterian Mission School. Cast off by family and friends at conversion, he took up the career of wandering evangelist, moving, winter and summer, across India from Kashmir to Madras, from Bengal to Gujrat and even into Thibet. He wears a saffron robe, goes barefoot and carries a New Testament. Remarkable stories of widespread movements toward Christ, which are gathering momentum in the recesses of Hindu society, are related by him. "The day is soon to come and is almost at the door, when every tree and every twig will shout praises to the Lord Jesus, and there will be one flock and one shepherd." Sunder Singh believes that this imminent turning to the Lord is a sign of the Second Coming of Christ. The movement seems to have connection with early Christian movements, and is described as the secret Christian Sanyasi Mission. The converts, scattered all over India, are working quietly until the time shall come to announce themselves. Sunder Singh tells of falling into the hands of a mob in Thibet, who brought him for execution to a local official. This man, after listening intently to Sunder, told him that he too was a follower of Christ,—at one time student in Calcutta University, and had received the baptism of the Spirit. He took Sunder to a place of worship, where 250 people met weekly. Mr. Saunders of the Madura Mission writes that Sunder preached in the Victoria Edward Hall in Madura, to an audience which packed the building to the doors, telling in simple and earnest way what Christ had done for him personally.

Christians and the Heathen Festival Days of China. In the passage from Greek paganism to Christianity, a not inconsiderable portion of the old system was retained, and has through the centuries proved a clog and source of infection. The same danger is present in the current transitions in Asia. A contributor to the *Chinese Recorder* suggests various ways in which, without abandoning the familiar festival days, they can be given a new moral content. The New Year Festival, for example, has a pronounced family character.

"Christians, while being warned against the perpetuation of heathen customs connected with the occasion, might be urged to make the gathering an opportunity for thanksgiving to God, for the mercies of the past year, and for prayer for a blessing on the coming year. During the first five days of the year no one is supposed to quarrel or revile. It might be pointed out, that an extension of this good rule to the other three hundred and sixty days of the year would be a blessing.

"On the Third of the Third Moon ancestors' graves are swept and repaired, and worship offered to the departed. This excess of filial piety is a matter upon which

the non-Christian Chinese pride themselves, and one accusation which they bring against Christians is that they have abandoned their ancestors. How is this reproach to be dealt with? Some would advocate an observance of the day without the ancestor worship, but with the use of flowers or other decorations. A better way is to avoid all display on the day itself but previous to the day to see that the family graves are put in good repair. If these are always in better order than the graves of the heathen around, they can be pointed out as a proof that Christians do revere the memory of their dead. The ancient catacombs of Rome may teach us a lesson. Let a gravestone be erected, and beside the ordinary inscription let a passage of Scripture or a few words expressing the Christian hope be engraved upon it. Such words as 'He will certainly rise again' would preach a quiet sermon for generations to come.

Further Suggestions. "The Eighth of the Fourth Moon is the day on which devout Buddhists seek to amass merit by releasing living creatures, though to many it is merely a holiday and a merrymaking season. The man who dumps a basket of eels into the river for the sake of the merit he is to gain thereby may at the same time have ridden to the river bank on a poor galled pony, and have thought nothing of it. There is no real compassion in the mind of the devotee. Lessons on kindness to children and to animals might be inculcated and lectures given on the working of such societies as those for the prevention of cruelty to children and to animals.

"On the Fifth of the Fifth Moon a medicated wine is drunk, and the children's faces are smeared with a yellow ointment in order to prevent sores and diseases. Lessons in school on hygiene and exercise and the futility of superstitious practices would be seasonable.

"The Birthday of Confucius is sometimes called the Festival of the Great Perfect One. If the day must be observed as a holiday in Christian schools, all ceremony should be carefully avoided. We must be jealous lest the unique position of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World, be encroached upon, and must guard against Christian schools being used to encourage the cult of any human teacher, however great.

"The Winter Clothing Festival (First of Tenth Moon) is the day on which paper clothing is provided for the beggar spirits, being paraded in the streets and afterwards burned. It is typical of a dead religion to devote attention to the dead while neglecting the living. Here is an opportunity for the introduction of the Dorcas Society into the Chinese Church. The making of real clothing for the living poor will make a healthy contrast to the making of paper clothing for disembodied spirits. Similarly with the feeding of hungry evil spirits with rice gruel on the Eighth of the Twelfth Moon, might not the Chinese Church be trained in works of genuine mercy, greatly to the spiritual benefit of the Christians themselves?"

The Higher Mission Schools in Japan are expanding rapidly on the material side. The American Methodist Aoyama Gakuin, for example, has recently built three new dormitories, a college building costing 240,000 *yen* and a president's home, together with three other residences for school officials. Practically all the money for this building programme has come from Japanese sources. To keep the spiritual tone of the schools to high Christian standards is more difficult because of the increasing number of non-Christian students in attendance. The larger institutions are installing regular student pastors, and organizing student churches. Doshisha University has a student church of four hundred members in a total enrollment of 1666. At the Kwansei Gakuin about one fourth of the 1283 students are Christians. At Kyushi Gakuin 167 enrolled as inquirers as a result of special evangelistic services. In this school every boy receives some piece of Christian literature once a week. Aoyama Gakuin reports flourishing Bible classes and a live student church. Meiji Gakuin has installed a well-trained student pastor and the school reports a remarkable case of a young student who during the last weeks of a tuberculous life led nine others to Christ.

Miss Bosanquet Pleads for a Christian Women's Magazine for Japanese Women. There are some twenty women's magazines, the largest of which, *The Women's World (Fujin Sekai)*, has a circulation of 130,000 but they are, on the whole, shallow and unwholesome. What is needed is a really well-written, well-illustrated magazine, which would contain reading of sufficient variety to be welcomed in many kinds of homes, and always have clear Bible teaching and spiritual help for Christians and non-Christians. The constituency is at hand,—the multitude of high school girls who leave school each year with a taste for literature, the still larger number of those with a primary education, the 500,000 fac-

tory women who after excessive work crave refreshment and instruction. Public libraries are small and few.

"The time has come," writes Miss Bosanquet, "when every city, town and large village with Christian work should have some place—if possible a bookshop—where good literature could be bought or at least a shelf in a bookstore, or a book-room connected with church or school. The organization of *Fujin Kwan,* or Mothers' Meetings, throughout the land is remarkably complete. If a part of the energies of these generally wonderfully competent little gatherings of Christian women could be turned in this direction, it would mean a new witness which would bring blessing to all. If each Mothers' Meeting would start little lending libraries for themselves, their neighbors, the Sunday school children, sick people and others, what a great and far-reaching work might be accomplished!"

Mission Incidents. A writer in the *Chinese Recorder* calls attention to the fact that in the strongly developed family consciousness of China is a uniquely prepared soil for family worship. Sometimes, however, things go wrong. A woman once confessed in a revival meeting, that for two months there had been two sets of prayer in her home. Her husband having offended her, she rarely spoke to him, refusing daily to go to his prayers, but "having prayers with *my* God," as she said, in another room.

She saw the wrong, confessed to him and after that they had one God, for the family lived in peace.

Korean Christianity is illustrated in a bundle of notes by the Rev. Alex. Pieters, in the *Korean Mission Field.* Thus:

"Last winter typhus fever broke out in a village which numbered among its inhabitants three Christian families. Although the people shun the infected houses, and as a rule will do absolutely nothing for the sick or dead, the Christians went unhesitatingly among the sick helping them and their families, and burying those who succumbed. . . . . A paralyzed man at a distance, wishing to attend a Bible conference in winter, one of the Christians in the town invited him to stay at his house. Four times each day for seven days, the Christians took turns carrying him on their backs up the steep hill to the church. . . . . The church where a certain woman lives was built almost entirely by the leader and his wife. For two years they denied themselves their noon meal in order to accumulate enough money to build. They keep a small inn and no guest goes away without the Gospel having been presented to him. They also have a supply of Scripture portions on hand, and sell about a hundred copies yearly. Last winter they paid all the expenses for a month of an evangelist who worked in their neighborhood. The woman walks every night up the hill near her house to engage in quiet prayer. . . . . In another church is a man nearly stone deaf. He has hired himself out for his food, clothes and a small sum of money. Every cent of his wages he gives for the work of the church. He is so appreciative of the visits of any traveling preacher, that he almost invariably presents him with some money to help pay his road expenses. In spite of his deafness he never misses a church service or Bible class."

Evangelism by the Hinghwa Conference. Mr. Stewart of Los Angeles, believing in the imminence of our Lord's return, has made grants for the more rapid and systematic preaching of the Word, for the fulfilment of this condition precedent to Christ's appearing. In the Hinghwa Conference (China), two evangelistic bands, with fourteen workers in each, have been, thanks to his aid, holding ten days' meetings in different parts of the country. The responsibility for planning and conducting the campaign was taken by the Chinese.

"They started in with fear and trembling, thinking it impossible to hold a non-Christian audience for ten days, but it was proven at each place that the tenth day was the best of all. Each day began with private devotion at 6.30. At 8 the men and women workers met for separate devotional meetings. At 9 the girls came for a children's meeting. During the ten days these girls learned Bible stories, hymns and the fundamental truths of the Gospel. The number reached was 7063. A Chinese woman was the leader, and taught the doctrine from specially prepared charts. At 10.30 the children were sent home and told to invite their mothers to the Women's Meeting which began at 11. These were always addressed by women who had themselves formerly been earnest idolaters. In six meetings there was an attendance of 10,845.

"In the afternoon the women went two by two to visit the homes in the neighboring villages. Sometimes it was possible to hold a prayer meeting in a Christian home. In many places we were asked to take away with us the ancestral tablets and idols, and leave a Bible picture in the most prominent place in the living room. The total number met in this way was 25,341.

"At the same time a meeting was held in the hall. Two thousand and eleven women were taught. Those who could not read, memorized important facts from the primer prepared for this work, and also learned to sing a hymn expressing the central themes of our meetings,—God the Father, and Christ the Saviour. During the last days of the meetings, we could hear this hymn repeated on streets, in homes and in the fields."

Brief Mission Notes. A writer in the *Missionary Bulletin* tells of a visit to the church of Pastor Uemura, a Presbyterian minister in Tokyo.

"We marveled at his lack of eloquence and slow, jerky manner of utterance but marveled still more at the large crowds that listened with rapt attention to the sermon. The reason is not far to seek. In the first place it is in the personality of the man. He is big every way one takes him, and that bigness is dominated by a masterly will, instinct with Pentecostal fervor. Then, too, he is *one of the very few outstanding examples among the Japanese preachers of an expository preacher. He simply takes the Word of God and explains its rich and varied meanings and makes it live. Oh, that more would do likewise!* Mr. Uemura is also a pastor of unusual executive ability and has a strong personal grip on his people. His church is a perfect hive of evangelistic industry. Its members are scattered all over the city of Tokyo, but wherever he can link up two or three in a little organization for winning men to Christ, he does so, and impresses each member with the responsibility of direct, self-sacrificing, effective evangelistic work. He has his own theological school, and his own band of missionaries, whom he is sending out to establish new churches. And for the support of all this he depends wholly upon Japanese sources. Indeed, he looks on the acceptance of foreign money as a stigma upon Japanese independence and self-respect."

Last year was a Record Year for Sake Distilling in Japan. The output reached the figure of 189,000,000 gallons,—29,000,000 more than the year preceding. The reason for this increase has been the great and general prosperity of the country. The government tax on alcoholic liquors brought in 100,000,000 *yen* as against 75,000,000 from property taxes, and 50,000,000 from taxes on income. Over against this social threat is forming an influential body of opinion in favor of suppression led by such men as Viscount Kaneko and Dr. Shu Miyake.

The Dangerous Imperialistic Notions of Prussia Seem to Have Their Counterpart in Japan. Mr. Shively mentions in the *Christian Movement in Japan* having made a careful study of the text-books of Japanese Middle Schools.

"Up to that time I had heard of the native belief among the common people in Humans and Super-Humans living here together as Ruler and Ruled, but I never expected to find it in print in a modern book. Some of the texts examined were written within five years. What was my surprise to find that the idea of god blood and human blood was on the point of departure, and the basis of the entire system of teaching. The country with its people exists because of the Imperial will. The subject whether he be scholar, tradesman, craftsman or farmer should have a single aim, namely, the accomplishment of the Imperial purpose. Personality has worth, as it can contribute to this end. The motive in life is this, and this alone."

Mr. Shively points out how little guidance in the direction of personal morality the boys in Japanese schools receive.

"Recently the dean of students in one of the highest government schools of the country raised the question as to how the students might be led to take higher ground as regards this problem. When it was suggested that the first step might well be to get the professors to lead off, he said that could not be done, as it was the prerogative of the professor in Japan to be as immoral as he chose to be. The situation is made worse by the accumulation in the educational centers of agencies whose purpose is to drag students into evil ways."

Among the Longer Publications Which the Rev. Albertus Pieters Has Run as Serials in Japanese Newspapers have been a Life of Christ in 92 parts, the Imai articles on Buddism, Mr. Kugimiya's "The Ideal Christian" and Mr. Kanamori's book on Christianity.

The Gospel Ship Fukuin Maru is again evangelizing the Inland Sea of Japan, Dr. Chiba preaching, and Philip Bickel, son of the beloved Luke Bickel, navigating his father's ship.

The Oriental Missionary Society has in four years visited ten million Japanese homes, leaving a Bible portion and other literature at each. The distributing band numbered about one hundred.

The General Feeling among Missionaries in Japan is that there has been a

Decided Change for the Better in the Preaching in Japanese Churches. This is described as being more expository, Christocentric and evangelistic than formerly.

The American Bible Society having furnished 25,000 inmates of Japanese prisons with the Bible, the Government has since then made it a rule to place a copy of both the Christian and Buddhist Scriptures in each cell in the Empire. Hundreds of prisoners are reading the Bible, and getting a new grip on life. In one prison near Tokyo, the governor, who is a Christian, states that more than fifty prisoners receive Bible instruction from two missionaries.

Various Social Enterprises of Japanese Christians are described in "The Christian Movement in Japan." A public-spirited Japanese has promised to Mr. Vories (who is both architect and evangelist) funds for the erection of a model Japanese dwelling for public education along the line of housing reform. A "Handbook of Opportunities for Social Service" has been issued by Mr. Sugiwara of the Institutional Church in Fukagawa and others. The Japanese W. C. T. U. has taken up the case of a girl indentured to an immoral life against her will, and repeatedly endeavoring to escape. Suit has been brought in court against her six owners. Widespread interest in this Misawa Chiyano case has provided the funds, and a Christian lawyer has it in hand.

"The prosecuting attorney of the province has refused to admit the case, saying that there are too many real sins to deal with, such as robbery, incendiarism, etc. The chief Procurator of the Empire is loath to open up the subject, because this servant girl's situation is so nearly universal, that there would be no end of cases. He admits that there is a law made many years ago covering the case, but it has never been invoked. The W. C. T. U. believes that it has no more important piece of work to do, than to demand that the court of the Empire go on record as to the valuation they place on woman's virtue and freedom."

Wonsan in Korea is the port through which pass 40,000 Chinese annually, bound for Russian or Manchurian territory. A Chinese pastor, Mr. Yu, stationed here preaches to these emigrants. As they often have to wait ten days for steamers, a wonderful opportunity of teaching them is offered. He has also evangelized in Chang Peh Fu, a portion of Manchurian territory which is isolated by great primeval forests. Here he was laid up with a frozen foot in an inn where he preached the Gospel faithfully to passing guests. The landlord and one servant kept him up night after night, after the guests were settled, questioning him about the Gospel, and listening to his message.

"Dreadful are the Remedies Used for the Cure of Leprosy," writes Dr. R. M. Wilson, of Kwangju, Korea.

"Human flesh is one of the most popular. Two leper boys were arrested near here last year, for killing two baby boys to be used as a cure for their leprosy. I am told by the chief of police that arrests are not infrequently made for the same crime. Only just recently a woman cut flesh from her thigh, to give to her husband for his leprosy. The wound on her leg became infected, and she had to be taken to a doctor who learned the cause of the trouble. She had tried to keep it a secret."

Monasticism Came from the East to the West and is Now Returning Eastward in the persons of French missionaries. They have established in Korea two convents with 11 French and 66 Korean nuns and a monastery with 21 monks.

After reading this item the eye of the writer fell on one dealing with the Y. M. C. A. in Japanese cities. Osaka and Kobe Associations are in friendly competition in their educational enrollment. The former had 2944 students last year, the latter 2262. While the Korean Catholic nuns finger their rosaries, keen Japanese boys start in at 6 a. m. studying commercial mathematics on the *abacus* and the building hums with young men until nine every evening. The Kobe Y. M. C. A. commercial day school, started a year ago, has fully justified itself.

Kuppammal or Rubbish Heap Was the Name of a little Hindu girl in Miss Margaret Beattie's Boarding School in India. By and by the father was converted and he requested that his daughter's name on the school rolls should be changed to Dhanabackiam, or Wealth of Riches.

American Missionaries the World Over Have Experienced the Brotherliness of British Officials. One pleasant instance is reported from Salonica by Dr. House, the President of the Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute. He says:

"The British authorities have permitted one of their well-digging machines to come up here and put down a large six-and-one-half-inch well for us, something I have long wished for. The machine is of American make and is in charge of an American, Mr. Freeman of Pittsburgh."

Boone University of the American Episcopalian Mission at Wuchang, China, has some 300 children in its city Sunday schools taught by Christian students of the university.

Mr. Reid of Ta-ku-tang sells Scriptures to the raftsmen who navigate the Yangtse, and who come from remote corners of the province. Their rafts are of immense size, consisting of tens of thousands of tree trunks, large and small, bound together with thick bamboo ropes. These rafts are often as large as 300 feet by 75 and are covered with thatched houses (to accommodate the hundred or more men of the crew), between which runs a miniature street. To these crews Mr. Reid often preaches and sells the Word.

After Miaos, Kopus, Nasus and Lisus the Tusus are coming en masse into the Kingdom. They are aborigines of Southwest China. Mr. Page writes from Kweichow that some 2000 are gathering for instruction and church membership. "It is impossible to convey to you in a letter, the tremendous enthusiasm there is among these Tusus for learning the Gospel. They are at it morning, noon and night. Not one of our evangelists comes back with a clear voice. All are as hoarse as can be from preaching."

Mr. E. C. Lobenstine, Chairman of the China Continuation Committee, is at present in America. He is a man of wealth engaged in business in Shanghai, and a missionary enthusiast. Mr. Lobenstine, having graduated at Yale in 1895, is naturally deeply interested in Yale in Changsha, and is promoting a plan to induce American teachers and professors to work short terms in mission colleges in China, in order to deepen the mutual friendship of the two lands. "How much it would mean on the New Haven Campus," exclaims Mr. A. P. Wilder, the secretary of Yale in China, "if there were six or eight teachers of the faculty who had spent a year at Changsha!" Mr. Lobenstine is full of the new system of teaching reading by symbols, which enables an illiterate coolie to read anything in sight in three weeks. First developed by missionaries, this system has been taken up by government schools, and promises revolutionary things in the line of education.

Dr. Newman of the American Baptist Hospital at Ungkung, China, was saved from death some time since by his American citizenship as Paul by his Roman. He had been severely beaten with clubs and poles by a mob of soldiery.

"Then they drove me at the end of the rope, and with constant beating to the north gate, and through the streets of the city—a trail of blood marking my passage. Finally they stopped on the edge of a pond evidently to decide what to do with me next. Some were for tying my feet also and throwing me into the pond. Others were for beating me to death, and still others advocated just shooting me and being done with it quickly. While they were arguing, I saw a soldier looking directly at me. I called him and explained to him that I was an American citizen. He spoke to the leaders and advised them to turn me loose. Evidently there were a good many in the mob who were of like mind. Finally this fellow untied the rope from my wrists and told me to go."

Students in the Newly Founded Hindu University at Benares,—an institution in whose establishment the fanatical anti-christian, Mrs. Annie Besant, had much to do,—have applied to the Bible Society for grants of Scriptures, such as are presented to students in other Indian Universities. The request has been allowed.

Mr. Palmer of the English Baptist Mission on the Congo calls attention to the improvement in village homes where Christian missions have been working. The street is wide and straight instead of haphazard, and in place of small low huts there are large houses. In the old huts, family

poultry and dogs lay side by side among nets, pots and other belongings.

"In the houses now being built, there is generally a middle room where the family can sit together, and which may be used for the entertainment of friends. Being fairly large it can be kept swept and tidy, and the men and women take a pride in the appearance of their homes. Furniture is constantly being added, and now in the homes, tables, chairs, pictures and floor matting are to be seen. One of the best innovations is the bed with its mosquito net and bedclothing. In fact, it is probably this new institution which accounts for much of the social improvement. Without the warmth derived from clothing, the cold of the early morning hours made it almost essential that the folks should sleep in tiny rooms, and if there were half-a-dozen inmates all the bettter, for they would keep one another warm. Again, oil and dirt were found most useful as cold resisters. Hence there was a premium against ablutions. Now, owing to the warmth derived from bedclothing, there is a growing desire for privacy and cleanliness,—two strong auxiliaries to moral growth."

The Story of Njela, "an inconspicuous Christian,"—evidently of the class of "Quartus, a brother,"—is told by Mr. Buxton, of the Heart of Africa Mission. He disappeared, and was supposed lost to the faith and the Church.

"For five months we heard nothing of him, and then the news came through a passer, that he had persuaded Chief Gambaradu to build a church which was now complete. We sent off a man at once, and after three days he came back with Brother Njela. The news was true,—five months' consecutive preaching all over Gambaradu's territory, a church built, hymns taught, witchcraft houses destroyed,—all done by a little man who can't even read, and only a slave captured in his childhood by the Azande. He seems the right stuff."

The Azande, or Niam Niams, a race of some millions of people, live where the frontiers of the Belgian Congo, the French Congo and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan converge. Their home is on the watershed between the Nile and the Congo. The name Niam Niam, which they repudiate, is in the nature of a soubriquet. It means Flesh, Flesh, and was given them by Arab traders in mocking allusion to their cannibal practices. The African Inland Mission, the Church Missionary Society, and the Heart of Africa Mission are all beginning pioneer work among them, having started the translation of the more important parts of the Bible jointly. This is proving to be a matter of no little difficulty owing to the complexities of the language. Thus the Azande tenses are uncannily numerous. One is used to denote an action just completed, another for an action done a few hours since, another for an action done yesterday and yet another for an action done long ago. In English one tense would be sufficient for all these situations. At first it was difficult to teach Azande boys because they did not seem to apprehend even the idea of learning. But they soon caught this and evince good mental faculties. Boys and men now try to teach others out of school hours in their own homes. The Azande are described as a great and virile people, intelligent and progressive, living midway between the bulwark of Christendom in Uganda and the Mohammedanism of the Sudan.

The Cape to Cairo Railway has, even in war time, crept forward two hundred miles to Bukawa, a point 450 miles north of the boundary of North Rhodesia on the Lualaba or Upper Congo. A writer in the Boer missionary organ, *De Konigsbode,* calls attention to the opening which this situation makes for Boer missionary advance. One can proceed from Cape Town 2570 miles by comfortable rail journey to the Upper Congo. Professor Du Plessis, the Boer missionary expert, has traveled through the land opened by the road's expansion and finds it healthy, well watered, fruitful and settled by the vigorous Basongi stock. These people, once cannibal, are ready for instruction. Their tongue is Bantu, which in related dialects is spoken by Boer missionaries. The treasury of the Boer society is at present blessed with a balance which the writer thinks a call for advance.

"We are thankful that the Lord has honored our church in South Africa, Mashona and Nyassaland, but here there is small opportunity for expansion. In Portuguese East Africa the attitude of the Government is obstructive. Are not all these circumstances a call to entrance into Upper Congoland in His name?"

The Rev. Theodore Elmer of the American Board Mission in Turkey has been driven out of the country. He had

been carrying on successful relief work for Armenian refugees. In Etchmiadzin he had forty looms at work weaving cotton cloth to be made into underclothing for destitute children and employed 700 women only to spin the yarn. This Puritan missionary represents the real thing in the line of church unity. He writes:

"*I employed a priest* to visit the sick and perform the last rites over the dead. . . . . The monastery authorities seeing the success of our cotton shop asked me to take over their wool shop which they were utterly unable to make go. *I paid their debts to 1000 refugee women* who had spun wool for them for two months without pay and took over the whole business. The Catholics gave me two large rooms in the old refectory of the monastery close beside the cathedral in which to carry on this work. Here we employed over 1500 women preparing and spinning woolen yarn which was woven into cloth for orphan children."

Mr. Elmer also engaged refugee men in building roads, *improving the grounds of an ancient Armenian church* and had started in to build an irrigation canal between Erivan and Etchmiadzin which would have brought water to town and employed 2000 refugees. But Turkish advance put an end to his Samaritan labors.

A Hindu Gentleman of Nellore, India, himself not a Christian, Mr. Lakshamanarsa Reddy, has bequeathed to the American Baptist Mission Hospital for Women and Children, four acres of land and 6000 *rupees* for building a rest house thereon; also an income of 100 *rupees* a year for the purchase of blankets for the Hospital.

IMPRESSIONS OF A VISITOR TO EUROPE ON THE EVE OF PEACE.

I.

W. R. Moody.

At the invitation of the British Ministry of Information the writer recently visited Great Britain and France with a group of representatives of the religious press. It was on October 31 that the party landed in Liverpool.

Ocean travel in war times is not in any sense a pleasant experience. From the time of leaving Sandy Hook to our arrival at Liverpool we were never free from the consciousness of the hazard of war. Immediately upon putting out to sea orders were issued for every passenger to either wear his life belt or keep it within reach, day and night. Such was the imminence of danger from torpedo attack that not a moment was to be lost if orders were issued to take to the small boats. Every precaution was taken against lights being seen at night and frequent boat drills were ordered, to insure order and discipline. Thus, in darkness and alert for an enemy attack, we stole away across the deep with our convoy of sixteen ships.

Landed in Liverpool, unfamiliar sights greeted us on every side. Public conveyances had women conductors, while heavy motor trucks were also driven by women. At railway stations they displaced the porters, and trunks were wheeled by "porterettes." On the evening train to London a notice in the railway carriage at once caught the eye, warning the traveling public to use utmost care to keep all shades drawn where the train might be visible from the water front, and further announcing that in the event of an enemy air raid all lights would be extinguished. Arriving in London, street signs at given intervals indicated the way to the nearest "bomb shelters," while about public buildings were heaps of sandbags or coverings of steel nets for protection from bombs. These were the first mute evidences of the horrors of war which in Flanders and France were soon to become so familiar to us. It does not take long in such scenes to imagine the terrible strain to which even the civil popu-

lation of Europe has been subjected during these four years.

Perhaps it was only imagination, but one thought he saw an analogous grimness in the countenances of men and women. They were enduring suffering of soul and mind, but with a determination to do so to the end. Upon children the war seemed also to have made its impress. They appeared mature for their ages, and there was less of the spontaneous gaiety of childhood than in pre-war times. It was evidently a nation engaged in a grim death struggle, but determined to win or die in the attempt.

Mourning was not greatly in evidence, as it was later seen in France, but this we were told was due to the generally accepted policy upon the part of those who were bereaved by the war. But in the faces of many sadness and suffering were more clearly delineated than could be expressed by visible expressions of mourning.

It was in this atmosphere that we arrived in England eleven days before the armistice was signed. But though we saw a sad land, we nevertheless recognized a people imbued with a noble and lofty ambition. One of our earliest meetings gave us a demonstration of this. It was at an informal dinner at the "Cheshire Cheese," that historic tavern memorable as a haunt of Samuel Johnson, where one is still shown his favorite chair and other memorabilia of the great lexicographer. Those whom we were invited to meet were representative of the thoughtful element in English life, being editors of the leading newspapers, reviews and journals. In the conversation about the table, as well as in the informal toasts, one was impressed with the noble idealism of these able men. National achievement they measured not in terms of territorial aggrandizement or material wealth, but in those of service. What the needs were of backward peoples was with them the burning question, and the opportunity of aiding them to the greatest degree of self-realization was to be the most effective result of the hoped-for victory. As one of our party said, it seemed almost like a meeting of a foreign missionary society.

Another evidence of this spirit is revealed in an association of recent organization, known as the "English-Speaking Union,"* founded by a recent graduate of Cambridge University, Major Evelyn Wrench. Already many distinguished statesmen, scholars and publicists have enrolled as members, and an ever increasing membership is growing up in different parts of the English-speaking world. Primarily, the object of this movement is to bring about a better knowledge of the affairs of peoples in Great Britain, North America, South Africa, Australasia and India, and thus to strengthen their mutual confidence and the bonds of amity. But this is in no spirit of complacent superiority or for selfish interests, but to render effective service to the world.

On another occasion we were privileged to meet leaders in the religious life of Great Britain in a dinner at the Reform Club given by Dr. J. Stuart Holden. Among those present were Bishop Taylor Smith, chaplain-general of the British army, Dr. J. H. Jowett, Dr. Peter Forsyth, Sir William Robertson Nicoll, of the *British Weekly,* Drs. Horton and Clifford, and others of worldwide fame. Here again we had a revelation of the soul of England yearning for noble Christian service in the closest fellowship and coöperation with the United States.

It was on the day the party of American editors of religious papers landed in Ireland that announcement was made of the signing of the armistice. The change in the atmosphere was noticeable immediately. Even the climate seemed to reflect the feelings of the people. Streets again were brightly lighted and restrictions of all kinds began to be less rigorously enforced. A new spirit was abroad. There was evidence of greater democracy than ever before and those who had shared in common dangers and anxieties gave expression to their common joy.

As the days passed, questionings were heard respecting the terms of peace, and the man in the street speculated upon the problems of reconstruction. But in those first glad hours of rejoicing Old England was again herself and rejoiced in unwonted

*The editor would gladly reply to any further inquiries respecting the English-Speaking Union, which should make a strong appeal to all Americans. The enrollment fee is $5 a year, and privileges are of a unique and valuable character.

demonstrations of thankfulness and joy. The King and Queen attended not only the special service of the Anglican Church to give thanksgiving, but united with their nonconformist subjects in a similar service in Albert Hall, conducted by such leaders as Drs. Jowett and Clifford, thus for the first time attending in an official way a "dissenters" service.

We will later describe impressions received in the devastated regions of Flanders and France, and some of the problems involved in the religious life, not only of Great Britain, but also of the United States.

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT."*

Principal T. R. O'Meara.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. 2 Cor. xii. 7-9.

Saint Paul as he wrote this passage was evidently thinking a great deal about things which troubled him. The specific thing that was on his mind and heart was what he called "a thorn in the flesh." What that thorn in the flesh was we do not know. Some people believe that it was some sort of affliction of the eyes, like ophthalmia, or something of that kind. Well, it may have been, or it may not have been. But we are quite sure of this, that it was something that was a very real and abiding trouble to that man of God as he lived his life and fulfilled his ministry. You see even the very greatest heroes, the great leaders, the veritable war horses in God's army were men and women who had things to trouble, buffet and worry them.

I think I am right in saying that never has there been a time in the history of the world when things that trouble men and women were more prominent than they are to-day. You may go in imagination or in your actual knowledge of conditions, to any part of the world, to the very ends of it if you like, and you will find that there is at the present time a condition of things to trouble the hearts and minds of mankind such as has never been before. Our poor old world really seems all upside down. We often wonder what has gone wrong. The things that trouble people seem to be in the preëminence over the whole wide world to-day.

But you need not go to the ends of the earth; you can find right now in the lives of those gathered here things that trouble far more than many of us have ever experienced in the past. Can you ever remember a time when you have individually had to face so many things that were trying and difficult? My heart goes out in pity for the man or the woman who to-day can go care-free and say that he is just as free from trouble as ever he was in his life. He is sadly out of place and there is something wrong with him if, during these days through which we are now passing, he is not facing and dealing with things that trouble him, bearing burdens that he has never before been called upon to bear.

From the state of things in the wide world about us, and from the condition of our own homes and our own hearts there have lately been born in our midst and presented to our minds problems which we have never had to face before. There are problems of the mind. We cannot get away from our problems to-day; and it is the sign of a weak and very shallow disposition not to face issues, and not to think difficulties through to a finish. We are facing mental problems. And we are also facing, born of the present condition of things, moral problems, problems of right and wrong which we have never had to face before, in combinations of which we have never dreamed. Things that we have always believed were clearly wrong, everybody around us in our social set and domestic environment at home is saying

*Delivered at the Northfield General Conference of Christian Workers, August, 1918.

are quite right; oh, these moral problems, how they do worry and burden us in these days!

Not only are there problems of the mind, and moral problems, but more serious still, there are spiritual problems which did not seem to exist a few years ago. The condition of things which broke upon the world four years ago seems to create a whole lot of spiritual problems and perplexities, and we have to face them and think them out. There are a great many men and women everywhere who have anxieties about the present condition of things, spiritual troubles of which they are anxious to find the solution. Let us be strong enough and honest enough, instead of sidestepping the issue, to face our difficulties and troubles as I believe God intends us to do.

When Saint Paul faced this great trouble of his, this thorn in the flesh, he said, "I think I can do my work better if I can get rid of it," and so he went one day to God and said: "O God, look in pity upon Thy servant. Stretch forth Thy power and take this thorn in the flesh away from me." And God said, "I cannot." Saint Paul, after a time perhaps, went back to God, for he was very much in earnest about this thing, and the thorn in the flesh was keeping him back and making his ministry very difficult. So again he went to God and said: "O God, I have come back to Thee. I want to ask once more about this thorn in the flesh. It is a hindrance, it is a trouble and it is a detriment. Please take away my thorn in the flesh." But the second time God definitely refused to answer the prayer of His servant in the way that he expected. And Saint Paul went on, I imagine, for some time and then in great distress, with a great and pressing sense of his need, the third time this spirit-taught man went back to God and just pleaded with Him to take from him this thorn in the flesh. And God would not do it; God could not do it; God refused to answer the prayer, at least in the way he desired. God was dealing with one of the greatest men that He ever had in His service and yet He point-blank refused to answer the prayer in the way His servant asked Him. Ah, do not let us be downcast or discouraged if we do not get our prayers answered in the way that we with our limited understanding desire. Remember that God refused to answer the prayer of Saint Paul and take away his thorn in the flesh.

There are two ways, and only two, as far as I know, of obtaining relief when the burden is too heavy to be borne. We can either go and ask some friend to take part of our load and carry it for us,—which is a way God very seldom deals with His people,—or we can go aside and get new encouragement, new cheer, new hope, new strength ourselves, and then take up the burden with the renewed strength, the increased power, and carry it as it is appointed us to bear; that is the way our God very frequently deals with His people. Saint Paul asked Him three times over to take this thorn in the flesh away, and three times over the loving, all-wise God refused the petition. But He said, "Paul, I cannot take the thorn in the flesh from you, but, My dear servant, here is something better: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'" And what God said, what God meant for His servant of old, God means for us who are gathered here to-day.

Very briefly let me, as it were, emphasize these statements: "My grace." Paul had been thinking about the things that troubled him. He had been thinking about this thing and that thing and especially about the thorn in the flesh; himself, himself, all the time. God spoke to him and He said, "Paul,"—and His very first word rebuked him for thinking of himself,—"'My grace'; why, man, do not be thinking about your thorn in the flesh and your limitations and your troubles and your weaknesses and your sufferings. Think not of yourself, but think of Me." He bade Saint Paul take his eyes off himself and turn his gaze and his confidence and his hope to God instead of to himself. Oh, that I could reach Christendom and all our great allied nations to-day with the truth of which we are speaking. What are we doing? What have we of the British Empire been doing for these long four years? What have you, more or less, been doing for a year and a half past? You have been looking to your Army, you have been looking to your Navy, you have been looking to your great leaders in the State. You have been looking, and we have been looking, to our Allies. We have been looking to all kinds of human helps, and

sources of increased strength; and, through it all, what a deadly peril there has been of taking our eyes off our one source of wisdom and strength and victory and power, the loving, living God! I for one believe that God cannot give our allied nations the victory that He longs to give, and I for one believe that it will not be safe for our allied nations to have a lasting, complete and sweeping victory until we have learned from one end of the earth to the other to turn our eyes of faith and confidence and hope and expectation from ourselves, from our own efforts and our own sufferings and our own need, and center them all absolutely in the living God, and in His honor and His glory. Let us get our eyes off all things else and let us get them fixed on God, upon Him Who sits upon the throne of His glory.

"My *grace*," how I love that word! The longer I am a Christian the more I seem to need it. The more I study the Bible, the deeper the riches in that word seem to be. "My *grace*," that which God gives without money and without price: that which it is impossible for anybody to buy or earn; that which God in His great and infinite love offers you and me without money and without price; "My *grace*."

Some of us need to go back and learn some of the very simplest things of God's revealed Word; we need to get back to this, that at the beginning, the middle and the end, it is all God's grace. You have a life to live, and I have a life to live. You have a work to do in life, and so have I. Let us learn right here and now that the secret of success and the secret of victory are not in effort, but in union with Christ. The secret of victory is not in trying, trying, trying, but in appropriating what has already been done for us. It is within our reach; it is complete, it is perfect, it is all that we need. May its very simplicity not be the means of keeping us away from its enjoyment? "My grace!"

Then I come to a very precious little word,—sometimes I think that the smallest words are the biggest,—one of the present tenses of the Bible: "My grace *is* sufficient." Now notice, God did not say to Saint Paul, "My grace *was* sufficient." Paul on the way to Damascus had a simply wonderful experience when God met him and he experienced that instantaneous and miraculous conversion of his, when God revealed Himself to His servant, and his whole life was revolutionized and changed. And yet in speaking to him God did not say, "Paul, my grace was sufficient for thee at the time of conversion." No; He did not speak of the past, although Paul had a glorious past to speak of. Nor did He say to him, "My grace *will be* sufficient in the golden future which is before you." Saint Paul had a great future before him in this world and in the next; and nobody could have overstated the glory of that future. But God did not say, "My grace *will be* sufficient for you in the golden days unborn." But in my Bible, and in yours, you will find it the same; God did say to him, "My grace *is* sufficient," now and here. It was true in the days of Saint Paul; he proved it to be gloriously true. And it is just as true for you and for me as it was true for this great man of God all these centuries ago, "My grace *is*," now and here, "sufficient."

I wonder if many of you are familiar with the life and work of that great and good man, Prebendary Webb-Peploe, whose church and work are in London, England. His ministry here at Northfield in the early days was greatly owned and blessed of God. He is now a man, I think, of 83 or 84 years, and yet he has all the energy and strength and push of a man of half his age, and is still in charge of one of the largest churches in London. It is said of him that he knows his English Bible better than any other man living. The early part of his ministry was formal and fruitless. He was ordained to the ministry of the Church of England and fulfilled a formal ministry in a country parish, but never had souls converted nor any work of grace done. There was never any reality in his own heart and ministry, in those days. After some years had passed God came into his home in that country village and took from it their little child. The days through which he then passed were the darkest of his life. After the funeral service Mr. Webb-Peploe went back into his home and into his study, shut and locked the door, and falling down upon his knees sobbed out his cry of agony before God. He didn't know how long he was there, he had lost the sense of time, but he almost wished for himself that he might not live, so dark was the future, so

great was the suffering that he went through. After a time, kneeling there in his study he raised his head from his hands and looked across to the other side of the room, and there caught his eye a text which, though always there, he had never particularly noticed before. The words were these: "My grace is sufficient for thee." But a remarkable thing was noticed by him: that little word "is" was printed in type about three times as large as any of the other words in the text, and printed in brilliant colored ink. God used it as a direct message from Himself to the man's soul. Then and there he reached out and, as it were, laid hold upon the omnipotent, all-sufficient grace of God, and took Him at His word. His whole life and subsequent ministry were revolutionized by the entrance of the truth of which I am speaking, "My grace is sufficient." Whatever your difficulties this truth is within your easy and immediate reach at this moment; a blessed present tense, God's pledged word to you, "My grace *is* sufficient."

What a glorious word it is with which the text closes! "My grace is *sufficient.*" It is one of those big words in the English language that seems to me not to have any beginning, and I am quite sure has no ending. It starts I don't know where, and it stretches out right through life. It is all-comprehensive. There is no limit to its meaning: "My grace is *sufficient.*"

And so it is my privilege to bring you this message to-day, and to pledge you in God's name that if you will put Him to the test you will not find Him wanting; we may bring every need of our lives, of our souls and bodies to Him. God only knows what failure or selfishness or sin may be behind me or behind you. But we can bring that sin, no matter what it is; that failure, no matter how complete; bring our present need whatever it is. The burden you are carrying, the anxious thought you have at this hour, the problem you have to face immediately you go home, bring that. Do not leave anything out. Your need of power and victory that you have not had in the past; yes, and your weakness, too, bring that. Bring everything for your own life, for your office, for your business, for your home, for your school, whatever it is, the environment in which you live and in which you have your greatest need. And not only for yourself, but think of everyone else about whom you are concerned. God does not want us to leave one need out, one anxiety, one thought, one perplexity; God wants us to bring it all,—everything.

Then over against that great record of your unutterable need place this marvelous statement of the living God: "My grace is sufficient." Do you believe it? Can you take it in? It is God's word to us. It is within our reach. It is so easily within our reach that we are afraid it is not for us, but it is. "Sufficient." "My grace is sufficient."

What a wonderful difference the Lord Jesus Christ makes, does He not? I was reading a few minutes ago that record in Saint John's Gospel about the loaves and fishes out in the wilderness. Was it not a great perplexity? Thousands and thousands of hungry people out in the wilderness, not able to get any food. And the Lord asked them, "How many loaves have you?"

"Why, practically none at all. There is a little lad here with five loaves and a couple of dried-up fishes. But what are they among so many? They are nothing at all."

"Oh," said the Master, "five loaves and two fishes. Bring them to Me. Bring them to Me." And He took those five barley loaves with the two little dried-up fishes, and looking up to heaven He blessed them. Then He started to break them; and the disciples took them out, and took them out, until the thousands of hungry people were fed all they could possibly eat. And then He said, "Go and gather up the fragments." And what did they find? Twelve baskets full of fragments over and above after thousands of people had had sufficient food. The Lord Jesus Christ makes all the difference in the world in a man's life. That is what I hope we will all come to realize anew and more fully than ever before, that by the grace of God in the Person, and through the work of Jesus Christ, that which is utterly beyond our reach, that in which we have completely failed in the past will be gloriously fulfilled, if only we will take Him at His word. Shall we not look up into His loving face in the quiet and solemn stillness of this hour and say to Him, "Thy grace—*is*—sufficient—for me"?

THE THREE QUESTIONS AND THE THREE THINGS.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D. D.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation. . . . . There the glorious LORD *will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. . . . . For the* LORD *is our judge, the* LORD *is our lawgiver, the* LORD *is our king; he will save us. Isa. xxxiii. 20, 21, 22.*

This beautiful text sums up the essence of Isaiah's message. In the preceding lectures we have been exclusively concerned with one phase of his prophetic work, namely, that Jerusalem was inviolate, that God would in nowise permit the Assyrians to destroy the Jewish people, because in Zion He had laid a corner stone, elect, tried and precious. That is to say, because the religious future of the world had been committed to this people, God would not allow Assyria to destroy their influence until His purposes had been accomplished.

We now turn to the most attractive phase of prophecy, which concerns itself with the Messiah, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Messianic prophecy is that form of prophecy which concerns itself with the coming of Jesus Christ and the establishment of God's kingdom on the earth. It falls into three different groups. There are prophecies concerned with the permanence of the kingdom of God. They do not speak of a person, but of a kingdom, which shall be everlasting. These prophecies are properly regarded as Messianic. Another group concerns itself with the religious influence of the Jews upon other nations. Those prophecies are Messianic also because they have to do with the spread of religion. Then there is a third and possibly the most familiar group, that concerns itself with the personality of the Redeemer, breaking out here and there in the consciousness of the race—flashes of insight concerning the coming of the "still, strong Man of the soul's need," Who should be the Saviour of the world. Isaiah, of course, is preëminent in that; and while there are references to the permanence of the kingdom and the influence of the Jew upon other nations, Isaiah seems to have confined himself specifically to certain definite, clearly sketched conceptions of the personality of our Lord.

Why did Isaiah concentrate attention upon this phase of Messianic prophecy? For two reasons, the first of which was that a permanent kingdom would mean nothing unless there was to be a King; an inviolate Jerusalem would be a Jerusalem without a leader unless there were promised unto Israel a Redeemer; and so he shapes up the faith of the godly remnant (as that faith had been stabilized by promises concerning the inviolate nature of their Holy City) around the personality of the Lord.

But there was another reason for that, namely, that a King Who could not redeem Israel would be a King Who could not help Israel. That generation, spiritually concerned, I mean, had received the most vivid and searching conception of God's nature that Israel had known up to that time. Throughout forty years Isaiah had consistently preached the holiness of God. Spiritual men felt as they had never before felt the intimate nearness, the awful reality of God's holiness. They saw the great curtain of fire between them and the brutal Assyrians. They were told that Assyria could not pass through it because she was unreal; and then they began to criticise their life, and they profoundly and terribly felt their unprotected nature. They wanted not only a King, but also a Deliverer and a Saviour. And so Isaiah's prophecies shaped themselves around those two conceptions. The King Who should be the head of the purified nation would also be a Deliverer Who should save those who by faith were identified with Him and enable them to live in the fire.

Now these pictures of Isaiah, for they are pictures, are sketched on time's horizon like Rembrandt etchings,—a few bold strokes, with much left to the imagination, and strikingly appealing to the awakened

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sensibility of the people. The three conspicuous Messianic prophecies of a personal kind are those which I have read to you,—the familiar one, most associated of course with the Christmas season, concerning the Divine Child; the second, less well known, concerning the spiritual endowment of the Messiah; and the third, best loved and known as associated with that unforgetable phrase wherein the Messiah is described as the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

There would be three things that spiritual men would wish to know about this coming Redeemer; there would be three very definite convictions needed to encourage them in the face of their growing spiritual sensibility. The first would concern itself with themselves. Is this great King Who is coming to be one of us? Is He to be a man like ourselves, identified in experience and racial relationships with our struggling life, so that He will be a compassionate, discriminating and sympathetic Friend and Helper? The second would be, Is this great King Who is coming to deliver us able Himself to live in the holy fire? That thought would concern itself with His sinlessness, as we should call it, or, as they preferred to call it, His holiness. The third would concern itself with His power. Was He able to protect, shelter and strengthen those that were weak and ineffective, until they had grown strong, and would they be able in fellowship with Him to find a standard by which to test life and to sift out the false from the true, to know the real from the unreal? These were questions which Isaiah sensed in the hearts and thoughts of his time and endeavored to answer and to anticipate in his striking descriptions of Christ.

First of all, in this very familiar prophecy concerning the birth of the Divine Child, Isaiah is trying to shape up in the consciousness of his time the deep conviction which underlies our faith in the Incarnation. There is no more profound or suggestive description of our Lord in the Bible than that in John i. 14, where the Apostle speaks of Him as the Word becoming flesh, Who pitched His tent among us, and Who grew up in intimate relation with the human race, so that He shared our experiences, for weal or woe. And that word "tabernacle" of course goes back to the wilderness experience of the Hebrew when the deepest impression made on him was that God dwelt with him and traveled with him and shared his misfortunes and afflictions even though he were sinful and ill deserving. It is an unforgetable and glorious truth, that nothing is able to alienate God from our life even though for a time we seem to be careless, indifferent and grossly sinful.

Isaiah had shaped up that thought in an age when such a conception concretely considered was quite alien from God. God as All-Power was, of course, an easy conception for both Jew and heathen. God as awful Holiness, as a devouring Fire of righteousness, had been wrought into the consciousness of that generation as had never been experienced before. But after all, could God suffer? Was it possible for Him to enter into such relation with the human race that He would become an experimental Sharer in its weaknesses; to be a helpless Babe and grow up a tender plant, to receive the impressions that come to a child, to share in the experiences, hardships and sufferings of that all too-tried and harassed people? That was a thought quite remote from the imagination or understanding of those times, and yet here you find in Isaiah that central conception of the Messiah. He answers the question as later prophets answered it, by telling them plainly that "Your King and Deliverer will be one of yourselves; born in your midst, He will grow up in your nation, He will share in your life; He will be a suffering Servant. He will be a Saviour first of all through His intimate and experimental contact with your life."

All our thinking of Christ must begin there. If there is any reason why the orthodox theology of Christ's Deity has failed to impress some in our own time, I think it has been due largely to the fact that we have been afraid that we should compromise our doctrine of Deity by admitting the essential humanness of our Lord. And yet the humanness of Jesus has ever been the point of contact with suffering humanity, and not until men have realized that can they understand His Deity and His power. Why, the conception of Christ with very many orthodox Christians is as ab-

stract and formal as some Greek philosophical concept, simply because we have kept out of our conception of our Lord the elements of humanness that bring Him in close contact with ourselves. Now Isaiah is driving home that fact through the sacrificial experience of his time and making his generation feel that whatever God is as their Deliverer, He is an experimental Sharer in their sorrows and sufferings.

You know how gloriously later generations came to realize that. And yet have we fully understood it, that our Lord has joined our desert caravan for weal and woe, and that His tent ropes are tangled with ours? There is no pain or agony of the human heart but that He knows it already. And with what a gentle wooing note this great prophet of holiness spoke home to those sensitive hearts about this Child Who should become "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!"

But as soon as they had become familiar with that blessed thought, a fear would strike their hearts, a fear that grew slowly but surely in their experience as they came to understand Isaiah's teaching; a fear which he himself had experienced all too suddenly on that vision day when he saw the Lord and learned the lesson, that we too must learn, that nations are not necessarily identical with the Divine kingdom, and that patriotism is one thing and Christianity another. "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw . . . . the Lord,"—in the year that I realized that religion was something different from national destiny, in the year that I discovered that God was Something entirely different from the stereotyped conceptions of theology or the orderly and picturesque manifestations of a familiar ritual, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw . . . . the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." And I heard voices singing, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Glory is nothing but the manifested excellence of holiness, this all-consuming, unescapable fire, burning around men and nations and things, conditioning all national policies, dealing with all private thoughts. Those "eyes of glory" that were boring into the souls of men, Isaiah saw them and felt them, and cried out: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." It was Isaiah's first experimental contact with holiness, and he saw the mist rising, a mist occasioned by the contact of holy fire with unreality. That is the experience of every penitent man. First, there is contact with God, a fresh vision, and then growing mystification and confusion and doubt, until clouds and darkness surround him, and the man feels himself undone; and not until then could there come out of the smoke screen the angel of mercy and deliver him from his load of guilt.

The people would say, "We know that fire; we see what it can do to men and things. Is this King of ours Who is to be our Deliverer able to live in the fire?" And Isaiah answered it in the second prophecy concerning spiritual endowment. I will dwell only on one most significant phrase. George Adam Smith, I think, has translated it in a wonderful way. When Isaiah describes the Messiah as breathing the very atmosphere of fire, he says, "He lives on the very scent of the holiness of God."

Now what is holiness? What is holiness experienced by the believer? Is it not to feel God's reality, to feel it in some deep, elementary, intuitive sense; to feel it, and when you feel it to fear with that constant fear that is the beginning of knowledge? We have all in rare moments had such experiences—all too rare perchance they are—and yet when we have felt holiness around us we have known fear and a need of a Deliverer. We could not breathe this pure air of holy fellowship. Isaiah says: "Your King can. The very breath of His nostrils is the fear of the Lord, and He lives in the atmosphere of fire." That is what we mean, by the sinlessness of Christ. Study His earthly life as you will. Scrutinized as no man has ever been scrutinized by enemies—and keen, shrewd men they were, well versed in all kinds of moralities, in all sorts of religious theories—a Teacher of such moral standard as the world has never been able to comprehend, and yet not one of His enemies, not one of His intimate friends, detected in Him one jot or tittle of sin or consciousness of demerit in the sight of God.

I may be speaking to some who, with the best intentions in the world, have never been able to believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ. If you follow Him into His prayer closet, if you go with Him in His public life, if you consider Him all through His earthly experience, you cannot get away from the feeling that here is One Who is conscious of no difference in character between Himself and His Father, a sinlessness, a perfect harmony between His spirit and the Father's spirit, so that He could say, "I and my Father are one." So it was in Isaiah's time. To me, that is the most helpful and holy and encouraging thought of our blessed Saviour. He commands the world of reality in which we have to live if we are ever to see God. He is able to live there; its atmosphere is the breath of His nostrils.

What of His power? What of His tenderness? What of His compassion? Then Isaiah in another place tells them a story of the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land." When the King comes they will see Him in His relationship to individuals, to the concrete problems of this struggling life of ours. He would be like the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land." That is a beautiful figure, and George Adam Smith's description of it is an unforgetable one. He tells us, that in Palestine, where the fertile land joins the desert, some early spring day, a playful breeze will bring a seed out of the deep, cool forests and drop it there just on the edge of the desert but in a little patch of fertile soil. The seed quickly takes root and begins to grow; the little plant pushes its head up above the soil and seems to give promise of life. Then what happens? There comes the wind; it may be the wind from the south, it may be the Mediterranean breeze; and it blows the sand in drifts slowly but surely over the little plant and smothers out its life. But if you set a rock there on the edge of the desert, and drop the seedling behind the rock, it will take root and grow; and when the sand drifts, the rock will catch it on its unsheltered side until the seedling is strong and becomes a great tree. What a picture of life that is! There isn't a man here beyond forty but knows that had he had a little more shade around his life he would have been a stronger man. There has been too much glare and glitter, there has been too much exposure; and we have ofttimes found ourselves, even when we were growing well, overwhelmed by the long drift of influences round our life.

Take Peter's case. One of the hardest things that a Christian has to struggle with is the recollection of his stumbles and his falls. The world has a long memory for those things, and quickly forgets our virtues. What would have become of Simon Peter, who blasphemed the Lord's name because he was afraid of the chattering tongue of a servant girl, had it not been for the great Rock? Our Saviour put Himself down between Peter's sin and Peter's memory, and he never could think of his fall without seeing the Lord. Did you never think of that? "Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land,"—that is Isaiah's conception of the tenderness and effectiveness of our Lord's redeeming love. Our sins are hard to forget, they are hard to leave behind us. They dog our footsteps, as one of the psalmists says, like a miserable little cur snapping at our heels. They do not approach in frontal attacks, but slink up behind us, and even in our holiest moments they come to tell us that we have lost our chance. We need the shadow of the great Rock to save us from ourselves.

These are the three conceptions. Isaiah says to his generation: "Your King and Deliverer is one of you. He participates in all your sufferings and afflictions. He is able to save you because He Himself is holy. He lives in the very world of fire; that is His life. But He is so tender and discriminating and gentle that He becomes to you 'the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,' and your fellowship with Him will enable you to revive again." Such phrases! I wish I had time to dwell on them. Take one of them. "In His presence," says Isaiah, "the tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly." Martin Luther did not cause the Reformation, he could not have produced it; he was simply the occasion of it. There were many people all over Christendom in those days who wanted a change, but their tongues stammered because they could not think clearly;

they did not have the courage, until there came this iron-jawed monk who stood up before the world and uttered the great word that coördinated and consecrated the thoughts of the people, and the Reformation was the result of it. He taught the tongue of the stammerer to speak plainly. And oh, how many stammering folks there are in the world to-day among the Christians, stammering largely because of their ignorance of God or fear of what men may say! Yet in the presence of a strong, holy believer there comes that sense of the aroma of God, that overpowering something that is indescribable, but wonderfully real; and how plain and simple these things appear! Surely, you cannot miss the appeal of our great prophet.

Now let me turn to its bearing on our own time. Surely you have listened to these lectures about Isaiah very carelessly if you have not gained a simplified conception of God. The supreme fault of the American Church has been ignorance of the character of God. We have not known God. We have made so much of love that we have lost all sense of the fact that love without holiness is a love that we cannot trust. What in religion or in life can be believed in and loved unless it be good? We cannot believe in a love that we cannot trust, not very long; and we cannot trust a love that is not good. Our ignorance has been an ignorance of the holiness of God; there has not been any fear of the Lord in our hearts. There has been a great deal of terror; and terror is fear of an unknown God. That is why there are so many new cults in our land, so many broken hearts going to quacks and frauds of various kinds. They are in terror, they are frightened at the sudden discovery of the frailty of their earthly tabernacle. When these little temporary structures in which our selves are living for a while, are beginning to feel the effect of the weather, we run to the quacks to patch them up. Fear we do not know, but worry we have known in episodic ways. So our life alternates between panic and indifference, between absorption in materialism and the occasional withdrawal into some kind of frantic revival. And yet, one cannot know God until he fears Him; and one will never fear Him until he awake to His holiness.

It is absolutely useless to preach to this generation about a Saviour unless you believe you need salvation. You must know the holiness of God; and you will never know Him until He hurts you. Through some great breach in the wall of your life He is coming, with blessings and strength and glory. We shall never be saved from ourselves until we realize the holiness of God.

You talk about the judgment day that is coming. I tell you, you are judged every instant. You are living in a fire. Your "God is a consuming fire"; every element of unreality in your life is going to be burned up, only that which is real can last, and the real is the holy. When we feel that, we are confronted with an alternative; we simply cannot go on unless we are convinced that we are holy ourselves or unless as another alternative we can find a Redeemer. No man here would boast that he is fit to live in the fire; our experience in these trying times must set us on fresh quests for a Deliverer. Where shall we find the "balm in Gilead"? Where shall we find the Physician of our souls save in the Lord Jesus Christ, Who stands here and holds out His pierced hands, and bids us come unto Him and be at peace? When we find our Holy God we shall find our loving Saviour.

Consider the confused state of mind in America to-day about the war. We have our hearts in it and our boys in it. But I wonder if we have ever seen a bigger entity in the world than our nation. I wonder if we realize that there is a spiritual kingdom over which Germany has no influence, a spiritual kingdom that lives because it is holy; and that patriotism is unreal at bottom and dangerous to the nation unless it be grounded upon a vision of something infinitely greater than a nation, namely, God. Until we recover the sense of God and know that only God is great; that all nations and peoples stand or fall as they stand in His presence in need of a Saviour and a Redeemer, we shall never win from this war that without which its sacrifice and suffering will be unavailing. Let me then speak of the three things that we must get.

In the first place, we must learn from our own sufferings to understand the suf-

ferings of Jesus Christ our Lord. I confess it has been a mournful spectacle to notice men in the American pulpit, brilliant and highly endowed and lovers of their kind, trying to preach a saving gospel without a Cross, who have called all ideas of atonement survivals of paganism, mediævalism and other names. But to-day there is a new feeling coming into our hearts. We are discovering for the first time in our life that without the shedding of blood there is no putting away of any evil thing. Go back through the history of the world. How are you to find the track along which the great spiritual and moral accumulations of the race come to us? You will find it in only one way. You will find it marked by the graves of those who lived and died for that which was right. Our sons are showing us God as we have never known Him before. We try to learn the Atonement out of a book, we try to learn it out of our Bibles as a lesson is learned, by rote. We try to learn it by adopting the popular shibboleth of sectarianism. We cannot do it. We can only learn it through a broken heart; with the giving of our children for the putting away of this awful horror which has come upon the world. The feeling that without the shedding of their blood there can be no remission of this thing shall bring us at last once more before the Cross. We will understand the blood and the tears and the crying and the dying of the Son of God, and will know the mystery of the Atonement that makes us one with Him.

What is going to become of the great mass of people when this war is over, addressing themselves eagerly to the acquisition of money, with all this fearful confusion of thought concerning religion and Christianity, unless there be in the body of our nation a large number of people who have experimentally understood the sovereign doctrine of the atoning mercy of Christ? Look at the American pulpit to-day. Who are the men from whose pulpits have come the light, and with the light the saving and regenerating holiness to hold large masses of people in the thraldom of God? It has come from those men who are themselves acquainted with the atoning mercy of Christ; from the men who from experience of the mercy of Christ have felt themselves separated, consecrated and devoted to one supreme thing. Let me say that to you, my brethren of the ministry. You hold your credentials from God Almighty, and nothing in this world is important but that; to you, I mean, as His messengers. That is the first lesson we must learn.

The second is this: We must learn from our own sufferings the way into an intimate and abiding fellowship with God. Now we are not suffering much yet except in anticipation, but we shall surely suffer more. What are these casualty lists saying to you, my brethren? Why, when I look into the eager faces of these boys, and remember that this is an old man's war but a young man's fight, that they are going out to put away something that we are largely responsible for—our selfish, materialistic thinking for more than a generation now puts our boys, who were babies but yesterday playing with their toys, into that hell and fury in France—why is it? What are those casualty lists saying to us? They are telling our hearts to ache. They are making us feel what it is to live in a world like this. Then we get to thinking, Is this punishment, is this discipline, or is it something better still? It cannot be punishment, and, when a man reaches forty he gets rather tired of the word "discipline." He knows what it is. Look at him. I watch the men going by my house in Baltimore, clerks, upper clerks, managers of small enterprises, with their hair getting gray and their bodies beginning to stoop, with all their ambitions curtailed, and all their illusions gone, with the awful economic pressure upon them of family and life, and the hard struggle in business; and I say to myself, What these men want is not homilies about discipline; they want encouragement, they want to know that God is standing by them, patting them on the shoulder and saying to them, "Go on, and carry the load a little longer, for you will soon get to the top of the hill, and then I will feed you with such a feast as you never dreamed of." We know what these encouragers in life are. And have you ever noticed how keen the eye of Jesus was for that kind of thing? He sees a struggling man there; he says, "Courage, my brother, do not be afraid." That is what the word "fear not" means.

"Have courage; keep at it a little longer, for the end will come soon." Always looking about Him for the men and women that were struggling; poverty-stricken souls they seemed to be to others, but, oh, so faithful and so enduring.

And think of these mothers. I am thinking of one woman in Baltimore who has given five of the finest men I have ever known to this war, and she sent them away with a kiss on the day that her beloved husband was buried. There are thousands of women like that in the world to-day, and some of them are thinking of an unmarked grave in France. I would not like to call that discipline. I would rather call it an invitation to communion; for God opens up His great life, that aching, suffering life of His; for He knows it is a great deal harder to give your son than to give yourself. He knows what that is, and He is giving you a chance such as you never had before to come into the sacred intimacies of His inner life, and to know communion and learn obedience through the things that you suffer. What a chance that is!

The third thing is this: We must recover for ourselves the unshakable persuasion of the primacy of the Christian man. Let me give an illustration. Take Paul's experience on board the ship in the storm. An insignificant little Jew, from the point of view of the Roman soldiers, being taken over there, probably to be killed, for some foolish row he had had in Palestine. What did they care? What attention did the mariners pay to him? What did the captain of the ship think of this man? And yet when they were out in the midst of the awful storm, with their sails all beaten to shreds, and their mast all but gone, everything at loose ends, and everyone panic-stricken, when your technical man was doomed, and your experienced navigator was helpless, and when the soldiers were appalled and panic-stricken on the deck, this despised little man stood forth on the deck and said: "Do not be afraid, for God hath revealed unto me that not one of you shall lose his life." Look at this old world of ours. It is just like that Alexandrian corn ship, tossed here and there in the billows of trouble, with all your technical men confused and perplexed, and leaders of men lying prone on their faces. It is time for the man of God to stand forth calmly and unafraid and bid the world to be at peace. Don't you understand that? If you do not, you have never understood the infinite value of your spiritual endowment, the primacy of the spiritual man. For do you not see that Isaiah spoke of a time coming when eyes shall see and ears shall hear? That is about a generation of whom God had said, "Their eyes shall be gummed up, and their ears stopped, so that they can no longer understand." Our nation is going to need in the reconstruction time spiritual pathfinders, men who know the secret ways to the highways of God, men who have the audacity to live lonely lives, men who have the courage to preach for a generation in need, but men above all else who stand like Gibraltars, in sunshine and in rain, in storm and in calm, because they know they are standing upon eternity.

And who knows but that we may some day be brought to a condition of things when God will once more shake not only the earth, but the heavens also, and everything shall rock and reel, when the awful fire of holiness sweeps over it, and these little tabernacles of our bodies shall be taken down, and all those inconsequential accumulations that we call our wealth shall go like everything else and leave our personalities suspended between the eternities with that vital something in them that cannot die because it is made to live in the fire of God's holiness? That is what I mean by the primacy of the spiritual man.

Consecrate yourselves afresh to God. These times have come to us like ministering angels, ready to dedicate us to this cause of right, because behind the righteousness of nations we discern the holiness of God, ready to set us apart as holy and separate people unto the accomplishment of a permanent task. If you have faith in this God and fellowship with this Christ, I can promise you in His name, as His ambassador, that you shall be safe: safe in the period of reconstruction that is coming out of the war, safe in the awful fires of that eternal judgment day, safe and uninjured in the throne room of the King, because He has said, through His great servant, there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

EDITOR'S CORRESPONDENCE.

TSINGTAO, CHINA,
September 23, 1918.

Dear Mr. Moody:

Recently I have been preaching at a series of great semiannual temple festivals, each attended by thousands of deluded worshipers. At the last one, they worshiped a deified calf—a terrible sight to see the great courtyard crowded with people bowing before the image. It reminded me of Israel in the wilderness, only their idol was of gold, while this was of mud plastered over a cornstalk frame. The temple connected therewith was founded during the Ming Dynasty on the spot where was supposed to have been born a calf, not with the regulation hairy hide, but with one of fish scales. The sideshow gastronomical expert of an American circus who appears to crunch tacks was a tyro beside this Wonder which was said to voraciously eat scrap iron. There is more of the story, but it is better left untold.

The opening day was "Woman's Day"; for one of the ironies and inconsistencies of heathenism is this; though the Devil treats women in heathen religions with Prussian iron-heartedness, yet he makes them keen to continue their forced degradation. In order to attend, many tramped, from ten to one hundred *li* (a *li* is equal to one third of a mile) on their tiny, broken feet. Many of them I noticed sitting by the wayside, rubbing and resting their tortured underpinnings, to slowly and toilsomely resume their journey. On arrival at the temple there was practically no accommodation for them. The village was small; they were strangers, timid and confused. Many dragged themselves in to their journey's end late at night. No lights on the village streets; doors barred against robbers, and unopenable. It was the parable of the friend at midnight over again: "Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee." So they slept by the hundreds under the stars in the temple court, and around the sacred precinct. Fortunately the rain descended not until the day after the festival ended.

Each woman carried in her basket a brushbroom to use in sweeping off the idols (on which six months of dust had accumulated since the last festival); also to sweep the dirt floor of the temple and their grimy walls, this in symbolism that they rededicated themselves as servants to their deities. In a deeper and a more terrible sense than they know they are the slaves of demons: for the Scripture says "all idolaters are demon worshippers."

Indescribably repulsive specimens of beggar guilds traded on their womanly sympathies, to whom they readily gave money—this in their vain hope of "making merit" and getting themselves saved; the same motive that prompted them to make the pilgrimage, and to purchase and burn spirit money and incense. On many a face was written the longing for spiritual security and peace, unattainable by them, under the present method. And our endeavors to meet their need are so inadequate. For our station field of five million people (the smallest county of the five having over 3700 villages), we have but ten Bible women, who are poorly trained, and hired for only six months, and each drawing the immense salary of $30 Mexican for the half year.

The daily needs, and woes and ambitions of these women were reflected in the idols most worshiped. These were a mud dog (curer of consumption); a crippled dwarf (fender-off of accidents); and a certain female deity (giver of male children).

While the men gambled desperately and steadily, these women sat for hours at a time on the ground in front of the peripatetic theater, passer-on of salacious tales, and indispensable adjunct of priests in binding the people to themselves, their temples, and the idols and festivals. They convince the people that unless they produce money to support themselves and the theatricals, the wheat god will blast their harvest. And who are more concerned than these women in the preservation of their loved ones from starvation?

Pray for them in their appalling need—physical, mental and spiritual.

Sincerely yours,

CHARLES ERNEST SCOTT.

Receipts for January.

Armenian War Sufferers (Relief for):

13448	$ 10 00

Belgium (Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Norton's Work in):

13441	$ 10 00

Central Africa (Dan Crawford's Work in):

13444	$ 5 00
13445	5 00
13446	5 00
13453	2 00
	$ 17 00

India's Child Widows (Pandita Ramabai's Work Among):

13454	$ 12 00

Record of Christian Work (Free Distribution):

13440	$ 25
13442	2 00
13443	2 00
13447	2 00
13449	2 00
13450	1 00
13451	5 00
13452	4 00
13455	2 00
	$ 20 25

Religious Literature in Prisons (Free Distribution):

13441	$ 10 00

Record of Christian Work

A Review of Religious Thought and Activity and Bible Expositor.

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Our Book Table.

"After This" Or, The Church, The Kingdom, and The Glory. By Philip Mauro. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 190 pages. $1 net.

This is a well-written book; very stimulating in its interpretation of some of the difficult problems of the New Testament. It is written from the premillenarian standpoint, but with very few references to the millennium. Its main theme is the Church and the Kingdom of Heaven. It would be difficult anywhere to find a finer exposition of these two terms, in the light of what the Bible actually teaches. Much attention is given to the parables in Matt. xiii. With some details one might differ, but the parables are made to shine with a new luster. The questions raised will be new to many. The abiding impression is that New Testament prophecy is rounding up towards its fruition. The "After This" is nearer, and our Lord's anticipation of the general characteristics of this dispensation, in which we live, seems ever more remarkable.—*S. C. H.*

Appeal of the Nation (The). By George A. Gordon. Pilgrim Press, Boston. Cloth. 87 pages. 75 cents net.

The distinguished minister of the Old South Church of Boston has rendered a real service to the country by the delivery and publication of these addresses from his pulpit.

Of special force is the one to the citizens of the United States who were not born in them. For Dr. Gordon is himself one of these; and he is also one who wished and hoped, to the very last, that the United States might keep out of the war. So his appeal to the alien citizens to stand by the country of their adoption, and of their freedom, has the added weight which full knowledge of both sides and complete sympathy always give to argument or exhortation.

Though the volume was printed some time ago, it is still fresh and timely. Especially so is the address entitled "The Nation and Humanity." It is literally "up to the minute," in view of the present forecast of a reasonably early end of the war.

As a minister himself, the writer would hereby express his gratitude for the swift and direct confession of Dr. Gordon that his use of Scripture texts is, strictly speaking, of such a character as to require that the deliverances in this volume be, with two exceptions, described, not as sermons, but as addresses, which their author is careful to call them.—*W. O. S.*

Big Jobs for Little Churches. By John F. Cowan, D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 160 pages. 75 cents net.

A bibliography of country life literature at the end of this volume suggests the bright minds that in recent years have studied to make the country church more efficient. The author has been for fourteen years a country minister, and is still one, and so does not handle his subject with a ten-foot pole; further, he is an optimist. The dangers and difficulties of the situation often pointed out he knows well. He holds that a man need not be necessarily less spiritual because he is social and thrifty. He thinks there has been a "loose connection between worshiping God and packing apples honestly." Dr. Cowan believes that the minister should lead his church into every part of the community life. and lead the community into every part of the church life. What he advocates has prevailed in many communities under live parsons and responsive churches. But to-day what was once the exceptional method has become quite the common procedure, resulting in a revival of church life, and a general toning up of rural communities. Country ministers, and theological students, may with profit read this. Perhaps it may touch as with a coal of fire young men who will make the "job of the country church" their life task.—*T. C.*

Christian Religion (The). By Edward F. Williams. The Gorham Press, Boston. Cloth. 67 pages. 40 cents net.

Edward F. Williams gives us a straightforward statement of his conviction of the truth of Christianity. He protests against unfair criticism. In its place he demands a frank facing of the facts as they are. To this should be added an honest testing of Christianity by experience. If this be done the acceptance of Christianity will be inevitable. The book rings with a manly tone; an appeal to men throughout.—*S. C. H.*

Church Officers. By Frederick A. Agar. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Cloth. 91 pages. 50 cents.

This book would be considerably improved if it had a different title; such, for instance, as "The Training of Church Workers." For it is disappointing to open a book with a title which this one has, and find that it is not at all a discussion of the high topic announced. On the contrary, "Church Officers" are taken for granted, and their list is somewhat amazingly increased by the inclusion of the janitor, so designated. Besides that, the author says very distinctly that the book "undertakes to deal with the training of lay leaders for the tasks of the Church." And his

pages, in which there are not a few excellent suggestions, bear out this announcement. We therefore simply wonder why he did not give the book a name according to its nature.—*W. O. S.*

Dark People (The): Russia's Crisis. By Ernest Poole. Macmillan Co., New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 226 pages. $1.50 net.

The recent words of a well-known Christian statesman embody the message of this book:

"You may not understand Russia, but you must believe in Russia." Surely Russia's problem is great,—almost too great for comprehension. Certainly those away from Russia cannot possibly understand what she is undergoing. But the facts given here show some of the constructive forces at work in the building of a nation.

"The Dark People," well-named,—this peasant class,—without opportunity, education, and the implements necessary for advancement, pervade the atmosphere. How to handle these 160,000,000 is the question!

The author gives some of the feelings of "the dark people" as they expressed themselves to him. He arrives at these feelings by discussing, first of all, Petrograd, the Kerensky Government, the various political parties, and the Council of Workmen and Soldiers. Then follow the army, the railroads, industrial and labor problems, and the question of food and supplies, as he saw the situation in travel in that great country.

Since the problem culminates in these peasant folk he takes up their religious life, the Peasants' Congress, and their attitude toward the war, the revolution, the city workmen, and the land, basing the facts upon personal experience and the plea of the people themselves. How vivid the need, the darkness, the apparent hopelessness of it all! Yet what possibilities gleam up and what opportunities for progress, enterprise, and helpfulness! The inherent courage of the people is evident.

The last chapter is a striking portrayal of Russia's need. It is a specific case but it represents "the dark people." They have been inarticulate—they have lived in "bleak and lonely villages, in poverty and ignorance, ... but now at last, from underneath the present angry turmoil, from every part of Russia their deep voice begins to be heard."

And so the words of the statesman may be repeated: "You may not understand Russia, but you must *believe* in Russia. What man ever helped you the most? Was it not the man, who, when you were most discouraged, most nearly defeated, had confidence in you and said, 'I believe in you,' and acted as though he did? . . . . It is precisely so with a nation. . . . . Therefore we must believe in Russia."—*D.*

Gist of the Lesson (The). 1919. By R. A. Torrey. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Leatherette. 155 pages. 25 cents net.

This concise vest pocket exposition of the International Sunday School lessons for 1919 is now in its twentieth year of unquestioned usefulness. For busy people, who to a large degree do this most necessary and voluntary work in the Sunday school, this little book is packed with helpful suggestions. There are about three pages to a lesson, which can be looked over during those leisure moments one is unable otherwise to utilize.—*T. C.*

Other Fellow (The). By Richard W. Lewis. S. A. Mullikin Co., Marietta, Ohio. Cloth. 100 pages.

Mr. Richard W. Lewis is an evangelistic specialist, author, and lecturer of Meridian, Mississippi. He received an unfading impression many years ago from reading "Ourselves and Others," a little book by Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, which in part was the inspiration of the book before us. "The Other Fellow" is issued in a patriotic edition, with its white cover gaily decorated with the national colors.

In staccato sentences the author sets forth the foibles which we are prone to ascribe to others, when they are all too evident in ourselves. Such discourse has the function of the gadfly, to arouse by its stinging. The chapters hold up to view the seamy side of human nature, to show the ugliness of self, "the center of our times." They urge upon us, or rather, "upon the young, since there is little use to appeal to old human fossils," the need of seeing life from the viewpoint of our neighbor, that our attitude toward him may not be critical, but sympathetic. Thus we may uplift men and lead them into a higher order of life and labor, following the example of "the least self-centered of all men—the Christ-man."—*L. M. N.*

Pulpit in War Time (The). By various authors. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. Cloth. 173 pages.

A considerable company of ministers of the Presbyterian denomination, during the first year of our entrance into the war, waited upon President Wilson, who is himself an elder in the Presbyterian Church, and asked how the clergy of America could best contribute toward winning the war. The President did not mention the scores of ways ministers and churches could and did help in all the varied war drives, but he urged ministers to explain and emphasize the moral and spiritual issues for which we fought.

This suggestion was earnestly followed. And the pulpits of the land saw their unparalleled opportunity for a unique service. The ministry in many cases pointed out the injustice and cruelty on the one hand, and on the other the purpose of God to bring back good will to earth when justice has been done.

These ten sermons, by ten Chicago ministers, are in no way above the average, and were produced not for publication, but in the regular course of busy ministries; but all deal with the war, and seek to give a "bewildered and burdened world the consolations and the inspirations of the Gospel of Christ."

There is in them a fine, strong, patriotic tone. They are messages with backbone in them. Like minister, like people! The pulpits of America are in a large degree responsible for the way America went "over the top" at home and "over there."—*T. C.*

Saved as by Fire. By Cecil F. Wiggins, M. A., D. C. L. The Gorham Press, Boston. Cloth. 188 pages. $1.25 net.

The author of this little volume apologizes, perhaps unnecessarily, for the looseness of the literary style, only expressing the hope that these addresses may be found of sufficient spiritual quality to bring help and comfort to troubled souls—of whom there are full many enough to-day in all nations. Mr. Wiggins does not give realistic pictures of the war itself, but seeks to portray from his own standpoint the purposes of God in the sifting of the nations. He takes issue in favor of spiritual force against militaristic expression and expansion. So far as it goes little fault may be found with his argument. As happens, however, in numbers of other cases the rebuke to evil tendencies in the land of the writer is not given point or definiteness enough to make it fair as a matter of comparative ethics, or effective as a preachment from the pulpit. Mr. Wiggins, however, says many things sweetly, and some pathet-

ically, as to the religious interpretation of current history.—*C. A. S. D.*

Silent Nazarene (The). By Everett H. Sperow, A. M., B. D. The Gorham Press, Boston. Cloth. 300 pages. $1.25 net.

This it not a life of Christ. It is rather a rapid review of many of the scenes of His life to "make emphatic what Christ was." The eye is fixed on Him. His personality is the theme, more wonderful than miracle, greater even than His teaching, for He lived it. His teaching was an expression of His life.—*S. C. H.*

Through the Bible Day by Day. By Rev. F. B. Meyer. American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia. Illustrated. Cloth. 50 cents net each.

Ezra to Malachi. 225 pages.
The Gospels. 235 pages.
Acts to Ephesians. 190 pages.
Philippians to Revelation. 206 pages.

These volumes were published in the conviction that there is need everywhere of the habit of reading some portion of the Bible each day, and also, that if the readings were consecutive, the obscurities cleared away by an interpreter, and applications of the message suggested for the daily life, a continuous and lively interest would be sustained. All portions most suitable for daily reading are included. Dr. Meyer, widely known and beloved, and with a lifelong experience in Scripture interpretations, is preëminently fitted to do this service.

Illustrations by modern artists are numerous and to be found through all the volumes, aiding the interpretations. Introductions, outlines, and review questions assist the reader to understand and also to remember what he reads.

Busy people, students, commercial men, Sunday school teachers, workers, and adult scholars, soldiers and sailors, people in city and country, will, in Mr. Meyer's judgment, find, in these short portions for daily study, ample to furnish a daily meal of truth. Only by reading the Bible through, from the dawn of Genesis to the perfect day of the Revelation of St. John, can we know the Bible truly as the unveiling of the Divine purpose. Yet only as the reader is "not a forgetful hearer or reader, but a doer of the Word," will the glories of our Lord and the sacred mysteries of Scripture be unveiled to him. And even Mr. Meyer's commentary will be the more illuminating, as he suggests, if each day the reader's spirit as he opens Bible and Commentary is expressed in the psalmist's words, "Open thou thine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."—*T. C.*

Uncle Joe's Lincoln. By Edward A. Steiner. F. H. Revell Co., New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 171 pages. $1 net.

Professor Steiner's pen has versatility, as well as charm. He has long been an expert in immigration and one of the truest interpreters to us of alien people. The genuine and genial qualities of his heart furnished the sympathetic atmosphere in which we might see aright and discover the kinship we hold to those whom we call foreigners. This gift of interpretation he has shared with that lover of his kind and of all kinds, the late Jacob Riis. The book before us is a story for young folks of any age. It describes a group of lads in Hungary, fond of playing soldier, who are inspired to a higher patriotism by "Uncle Joe," a crippled veteran of the Civil War, who after twenty-five years in the United States had returned to his native land. His ardent devotion to Abraham Lincoln is the *motif* of the narrative and comes to fill the eager hearts of the lads, who listen to his stories of the wonderland across the sea. It is not surprising that all but one of these boys arrived sooner or later in New York and on the East Side revived the Lincoln Club, upon whose Service Flag six stars testify to the patriotism of these foreign-born, but loyal citizens of Lincoln's land.—*L. M. N.*

With God in the War. Edited by Charles L. Slattery. The Macmillan Co., New York. Cloth. 115 pages. 60 cents.

The author is a member of the War Commission of the Episcopal Church; and he has gathered here for the use of soldiers and others, noble expressions in prose and verse, from widely separated sources, which voice some of the hopes, prayers, convictions, and aspirations which we all feel, and are glad to find so fitly expressed as they are in these selections. The three divisions of the book are The Purpose, The Way, and The Goal. The purpose for which we entered the war must be kept unblemished. Our own lives kept true and unselfish will help form a highway for the purposes of God. Only thus can God lead the world to the goal which alone can justify the awful expenditure of tears and the superb sacrifice, and to the goal of "Freedom, Righteousness, and Love."—*T. C.*

World Within (The). By Rufus M. Jones, M. A., Litt. D. The Macmillan Co., New York. Cloth. 172 pages. $1.25.

A series of sweet, persuasive talks on the inner aspects of religion, by a Quaker professor who has marked pietistic or mystic leanings. The quotations from other thinkers are numerous and well chosen. The aim is to make spiritual religion seem in a sense natural (while supernatural) and, for a normal mind, inevitable. As in the case of all books by Dr. Jones the style is clear, the diction smooth, the argument comprehensible without effort. A little book with a good deal in it.—*C. A. S. D.*

BOOKS RECEIVED.

American Charities. By Amos G. Warner, Ph. D. Thos. Y. Crowell Co., New York. Charts. Cloth. Board. 541 pages. $2.50 net.

Christianity and Mormonism. By T. C. Smith. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. Paper. 16 pages. 5 cents net.

Christ in You. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. Board. 184 pages. $1.25 net.

Day After Day: A Manual of Devotions for Individual and Family Use. Complied and arranged by J. Wilbur Chapman, D. D. Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, Philadelphia. Cloth. 106 pages. 40 cents net.

Easter Hope (The) or The Life Immortal. By Rev. Andrew W. Archibald, D. D. The Judson Press, New York. Board. 105 pages.

France Facing Germany. By Georges Clémenceau. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. Cloth. 396 pages. $2 net.

God's Responsibility for the War. By Edward S. Drown, D. D. The Macmillan Co., New York. Board. 56 pages. 60 cents.

"I Cried, He Answered." Compiled and edited by Henry W. Adams, Norman H. Camp, William Norton and F. A. Steven. The Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. Cloth. 127 pages. 75 cents net.

Jerusalem: Its Redemption and Future. By various authors. Christian Herald, New York. Illustrated. Cloth. 227 pages.

Letters to a Soldier on Religion. By John Gardner. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. Board. 95 pages. 75 cents net.

Not Impossible Religion (A). By Silvanus P. Thompson. John Lane Co., New York. Cloth. 330 pages. $1.50 net.

Story of the Red Cross As Told to the Little Colonel (The). By Annie Fellows Johnston. The Page Co., Boston. Illustrated. Cloth. 85 pages. $1 net.

Teaching the Child Patriotism. By Kate Upson Clark. The Page Co., Boston. Frontispiece. Cloth. 175 pages. $1 net.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE.

Miss A. W. Pierson.

All correspondence relating to this Department should be sent to Miss A. W. Pierson, 10 Elston Road, Upper Montclair, N. J. Those desiring to enter the Course should read the Foreword in the January issue. Enter now and try for the $10 prize.

Scripture to be Read.

Gen. xii. 1-5; xiii. 1-13; xiv. 1-24; xviii. 1-8, 16-33; xix. 1-3, 12-29.

Questions to be Answered.

1. Who was this man and who was his uncle?
2. He started right but went steadily down. Give his downward steps as you see them.
3. How many trained fighting servants did the uncle bring to the rescue of his nephew?
4. Why did the uncle refuse to accept any present from the king of the wicked city?
5. What mysterious priest-king is mentioned in our lesson and of whom was he a type?
6. Who by his prayer nearly saved this wicked city from destruction?
7. How many times did the uncle plead with God that the city might not be destroyed?
8. How many converts to God would the nephew have had to win in his twenty years' residence in the city in order to have saved it from destruction?

Subject for Meditation.

What sort of people do I enjoy most and choose for my friends and associates? Are they those who live for God or those who care only for a good time?

The Man Who Dared to Play with Temptation.

What is the matter in that crowd? It looks like a free fight. Let us get closer and see what is the trouble. Yes, it is a fight, and tongues and fists are working hard. Upon inquiry we find that these are shepherds quarreling over a well which each claims, to the exclusion of the other. There is not sufficient water for the flocks of both, and one herd will have to be watered elsewhere. Two men approach, who seem to be the head shepherds, and inquire the cause of the quarrel. When it is explained, the elder man, who has a fine benevolent face, says to the younger, his nephew: "Our flocks are too large to be kept any longer together. We had better separate and go in different directions. Choose which way you will go and I will go the other." The younger one, instead of telling his uncle to choose first, looked about to see which part of the country seemed most desirable and better for pasture, then selfishly chose that part. Without a word of surprise at the selfishness of his choice, his uncle said, "Very well, you take what you have chosen and I will take what is left."

In the part of the country chosen by the nephew, there was a very wicked but prosperous city where he knew he would be able to make money and have advantages for his wife and daughters as well as for himself. He planned not to live right in the city, but just near enough to become known without actually living in the midst of the wickedness. So towards the city he and his family and servants turned their steps.

The next we hear of him he is living *in* the city, has been made a judge, and is greatly respected, while two of his daughters have married men of the city. But though he is judge and does not approve of the evil practices of the city, we do not hear of his starting a crusade to put down the wickedness and immorality. And though he sees the evil effects of the place upon his wife and daughters, he cannot make up his mind to leave it all and go where they can live godly lives without continually being tempted to compromise with evil.

After he had been living there for some time, four kings with their armies came against the city and took it, carrying away captive some prisoners and much spoil. Among the captive men were the judge and his wife and daughters and all their goods. As soon as the news reached the uncle he armed his servants and went to the rescue, slew the kings and brought back his nephew and all the spoil and captives that had been carried away. The king of the city was so grateful that he wished to reward him handsomely, but he refused to take even the smallest token.

One day, about sunset, as the judge sat upon his seat near the gate of the city, two fine-appearing men entered the city. Their appearance was so majestic that the judge instantly rose from his seat and, bowing low before them, invited them to lodge at his house. After being cordially urged, they accepted the invitation and went with him and he made them a feast of honor. During the evening, the strangers told the judge that God was going to send a terrible punishment upon the city, because of its wickedness and that he and his family must escape at once. The poor judge went and told his daughters and their husbands, but they only laughed at him and would not believe him. So the next morning he and his wife with two unmarried daughters, prepared reluctantly to leave their home and all their possessions. They are so loath to leave that finally the two strangers have to take their hands and fairly drag them out of the city. They have barely escaped, when God sends a terrible judgment upon the place, and the inhabitants and the city are utterly destroyed.

Doré. FLIGHT OF LOT.

The judge's wife, who looks back towards the city with longing eyes, is also destroyed, and only the judge and his two daughters escape, sad, forlorn and empty-handed, with nothing of the wealth they have risked so much to gain. Though they escape the destruction in the city, they die in poverty and disgrace.

THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

MARCH, 1919.

Saturday, 1st. *Now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. Eph. v. 8.*

The influence we exert in the world is created by our relationship to Jesus Christ, and our relationship to Jesus Christ is revealed by our influence.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 2nd. *He . . . . dwelt by the brook Cherith, ... and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up. 1 Kings xvii. 5-7.*

Not merely at the beginning, but throughout the Christian life, when outward things are at their lowest ebb, do we hear more readily what God desires to say to us. It is not when the tide of prosperity—material or spiritual—is at its highest that we most recognize God.

We are always driven to God at the lowest ebb of human things. God can speak to us, and we can hear, when the brook is no longer bubbling through the midst of life, but when it is dry. Our ears are apt to become very quick when our eyes fail for watching. When the brook dries up, the Word of the Lord often comes to men. When He withdraws His gifts it is that we may see Himself.—*J. Stuart Holden.*

Monday, 3rd. *Pray one for another. Jas. v. 16.*

I have been helped by praying for others; for by making an errand to God for them, I have gotten something for myself.—*Samuel Rutherford.*

Tuesday, 4th. *Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently. Deut. iv. 9.*

A Christian cannot help others where his own footing is uncertain. He cannot lead others to abide in Christ if he himself abides partly in the world. He cannot speak convincingly of joy and peace unless he has them steadily in his own soul. He can have power and value only by himself following Christ closely.—*J. R. Miller.*

Wednesday, 5th. *The word of God .... liveth and abideth for ever. 1 Pet. i. 23.*

The Word abideth! The Jew hated it, but it lived on, while the veil was torn away from the shrine which the Shekinah had forsaken, and while Jerusalem itself was destroyed. The Greek derided it, but it has seen his philosophy effete and his Acropolis in ruins. The Romans threw it into the flames, but it rose from its ashes, and swooped down upon the falling eagle. The reasoner cast it into the furnace, which his own negligence had heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated," but it came out without the smell of fire. The formalist fastened serpents around it to poison it, but it shook them off and felt no harm. The infidel cast it overboard in a tempest of sophistry and sarcasm, but it rode gallantly upon the crest of the proud waters. And it is living still, and is heard in the loudest swelling of the storm; it has been speaking all the while; it is speaking now.—*Morley Punshon.*

Thursday, 6th. *A ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. Gen. xxviii. 12.*

The ladder of Divine events
Rests on the earth of common things;
And we, although we earn our bread
Amid the lowliest, may tread
The rungs; and unseen hands and wings
Shall help us up the steep ascents.
What matter if our starting place
Be lowly? 'Tis our aim, the goal
We seek, that gives the twofold grace
Of strength and beauty to the soul.
—*Percy Leaver.*

Friday, 7th. *Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them. 2 Cor. vi. 16.*

God within us! Not only ever with us unseen, not only watching us in our secret moments and reading the very thoughts of our hearts, not only covering us with the shadow of His wings and lighting us with the light of His countenance, but within us—our bodies His temples, our hearts His home. Oh, if we could but grasp the thought we should live lives nobler and more beautiful!—*Frederick W. Farrar.*

Saturday, 8th. *Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 1 John iii. 22.*

If we expect to appropriate the "whatsoever" of His promises, we must strive to comply with the "whatsoever" of His commands.—*Samuel B. Randall.*

Sunday, 9th. *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Isa. xli. 10.*

Do not keep this sacred thought of Christ's companionship in sorrow for the larger trials of life. If the mote in the eye be large enough to annoy you, it is large enough to bring out His sympathy, and if the grief be too small for Him to compassionate and share, it is too small for you to be troubled by it. If you are ashamed to apply that Divine thought, "Christ bears this grief with me," to those petty molehills that you magnify into mountains sometimes, think to yourself that it is then a shame for you to be stumbling over them. But, on the other hand, never fear to be irreverent or too familiar in the thought that Christ is willing to help you to bear the pettiest, the minutest, the most insignificant of the daily annoyances that may come to ruffle you. He will do more: He will bear it with you, for if so be that we suffer with Him, He suffers with us.—*Alexander Maclaren.*

Monday, 10th. *Thy gentleness hath made me great. 2 Sam. xxii. 36.*

The gentleness of Christ is the comeliest ornament that a Christian can wear.—*William Arnot.*

Tuesday, 11th. *He gave . . . . to every man according to his several ability. Matt. xxv. 15.*

Many a child of God is cast down because the little love-service which may be required, seems too small to be counted for aught in the great harvest field, forgetting that the Lord asks of His children only so much as He gives them ability to perform.—*Augustus C. Thompson.*

Wednesday, 12th. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. v. 21.*

The idea of atonement is a difficulty to many. They see no need for a sacrifice. If "God is love," if He be a Father, He can forgive upon repentance without any atonement. But God cannot deal so lightly with sin. Sin is too deep, too terrible, too tragic, to be dismissed with a word, a stroke of the pen. To make forgiveness possible, God Himself had to suffer in the person of His Son,—sweat, pain, wounds, blood and death. To vindicate His holy law, God Himself, through His Son, gathered to His own heart the pain, shame and curse of sin—*our* shame and curse—and bore them for us, offering in our stead the sacrifice of a perfect obedience to God's holy law. Those who unite themselves to Christ by a living faith share in the saving benefits of Christ's atoning death.—*J. D. Jones.*

Thursday, 13th. *How then can man be justified with God? Job xxv. 4.*

Bildad's question finds its answer the grand difficulty of all heathen nations and ages; its complete solution, in the Gospel. At the foot of the Cross, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, the sinner changes into a saint; the unjust into the just; the condemned into the acquitted; the child of wrath into an heir of heaven. In the eyes of his Sovereign Judge, the believer . . . . is without spot, or stain, or any such thing. "There is . . . . no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—*Thomas Guthrie.*

Friday, 14th. *And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. Luke xix. 8.*

Suppose a man is going to the temple with an offering to lay upon the altar. As he comes to the door, he remembers some man outside who can point the finger of scorn and contempt at him, who knows of a wrong relationship which exists between him and one of his fellows. What must such as he do? Is he to go into the temple and pray that God will send a great wave of religious enthusiasm over him, in which all this moral uneasiness will be lost? "No," said Jesus, "leave . . . . thy gift . . . . and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother." A man has no gift for God in his hand who has some dishonor in his heart.—*John A. Hutton.*

Saturday, 15th. *If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matt. vi. 15.*

He who cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself, for every man hath need to be forgiven.—*E. Herbert.*

Sunday, 16th. *Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed. Prov. xiii. 13.*

"Was mine the blame that adverse winds—
Heaven-sent as all winds be—
Blew my fair ship now here, now there,
On life's tempestuous sea?"
"For other ships the same winds blew,
Yet they their course kept, straight and true."

"Was mine the fault that in the dark—
God's stars with clouds He hid—
My bearings lost, my hapless bark
On reefs was buffeted?"
"No faithful compass then had you,
With needle ever pointing true."

"I could not see; how should I know—
God surely placed them there—
That cruel rocks lay just below
The blue waves shining fair?"
"O heedless mariner, to start
To cross life's sea without a chart!"

—*Grace Wood Castle.*

Monday, 17th. *The* LORD *looked upon [Gideon], and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Judg. vi. 14.*

Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel. Judg. viii. 28.

Where God's finger points, there God's hand will make the way.—*Selected.*

Tuesday, 18th. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Eph. vi. 10.*

Might is even more than power. It is dynamite; it is irresistible; it is the Divine power which moves easily but omnipotently through this great and mighty universe.—*A. B. Simpson.*

Wednesday, 19th. *A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. John xvi. 16.*

Every day is bringing Christ's advent nearer—lessening the span of that arc of promise. The "little while, and ye shall not see me," is widening; the "little while, and ye shall see me," is diminishing. The Church is like the shipmen in the Sea of Adria, who "deemed that they drew near to some country." The historian of Columbus speaks thus of the great discoverer's approach to the shores of the unknown New World: "The admiral gave orders that the sails should be close reefed and the lead kept going, and that they should sail closely, being afraid of shoals and breakers; feeling certain that the first gleam of daybreak would discover land under their bows." Is this true in a nobler sense of the "better country"? Are we thus on the outlook to "see the king in his beauty," and "the land that is very far off"?—*John R. Macduff.*

Thursday, 20th. *Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Col. iv. 2.*

Have you ever noticed that the word "watch" in the New Testament has no object attached to it? We are never told *what* we are to watch. Watch your own heart? God forbid; you will only get into bondage and trouble. Watch the devil? No; he will keep you occupied with that only, if you do. Watch those around you? No, they have their own troubles and so have you. What, then, are we to watch? Watch the Lord Jesus Christ, "Looking unto Jesus." Be occupied with Christ; and as you pray, watch, looking unto Him.—*W. H. Griffith Thomas.*

Friday, 21st. *Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Rom. xii. 2.*

Imagination is the supreme faculty within us. It is the creative, the pioneer, the artistic faculty. It paints the picture of the future. It is either an inspiration, or a handicap. . . . . The difference between success and failure is often the difference between an imagination controlled and one uncontrolled. Christ can control it as we have not, and cannot, and He gets His opportunity as the mind is surrendered to His direction.—*John Douglas Adam.*

Saturday, 22nd. *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the* LORD *upholdeth him with his hand. Ps. xxxvii. 24.*

The best of men and the most earnest workers will make enough of mistakes to keep them humble. Thank God for mistakes and take courage. Don't give up on account of mistakes.—*D. L. Moody.*

Sunday, 23rd. *He that endureth to the end shall be saved. Matt. x. 22.*

No ship drifts into harbor. The ocean of life has many a hidden current, many a sudden storm; and he who would win port at last must stand to his helm, while his ship drives on through opposing currents and against contrary winds. In this sea, nothing drifts except to the shores of destruction; and few ships come into port which have not battled long with angry head winds. Pleasant weather there may be in the voyage of life, but never weather so pleasant that the hand may leave the helm, or the eye the compass. Where there is least peril of storm there may be most peril of being carried away from the right course by an unnoticed current. Keep, then, the eye on the compass, the hand upon the rudder. That is the only sure way of arriving at the desired haven. To let go the helm and allow the ship to drift before the winds and the waves may seem to be the easiest, the most natural, even the most enjoyable, thing to do; but a voyage which is conducted on that mistaken principle is sure, sooner or later, to end on the cruel rocks, on the treacherous sands, or in the devouring sea.—*Selected.*

Monday, 24th. *Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one.*

. . . . *After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. Matt. xxv. 15, 19.*

The measure of every man's responsibility is determined by the abilities given him. —*Selected.*

Tuesday, 25th. *What is my life? 1 Sam. xviii. 18.*

A sacred burden is the life ye bear,
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly:
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly;
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onward, upward, till the goal ye win.
—*Selected.*

Wednesday, 26th. *It is appointed unto men once. Heb. ix. 27.*

"I can only pass this way once," somebody thoughtfully said concerning life. Have you ever thought how that note of once-ness strikes through everybody's life in this world? Once a babe; once a child; once a youth; once a young man or woman; once in the vigor of maturity; once in old age; once dying. All the stages we pass through once only. . . . . That grim fact, therefore, makes living a mightily serious matter. So the question—how to make this one life of ours in this world nobly effective—is a very practical question for each one of us.—*Wayland Hoyt.*

Thursday, 27th. *Ye shall know them by their fruits. Matt. vii. 16.*

Dr. Joseph Parker, not long before he died, said, "When Thomas said, 'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, ... I will not believe,' he said what men would forever after say about the Church." And the world is saying, "Except we see, unless we see, we will not believe." The world is saying that about you. You can do many things that are very pretty in your service for God,—and very paltry.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

Friday, 28th. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. vi. 4.*

God never gives us a call without its being a privilege, and He never gives us the privilege to come up higher without stretching out His hand to lift us up. Come up higher and higher into the realities and glories of the resurrection life, knowing that "your life is hid with Christ in God." Shake yourself loose of every incumbrance, turn your back on every defilement, give yourself over like clay to the hands of the Potter, that He may stamp upon you the fullness of His own resurrection glory, that you, "beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, [may be] changed . . . . from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."—*W. H. M. Hay Aitken.*

Saturday, 29th. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. Luke ix. 23.*

To walk when we intended to run, to work when we had planned to play, to give out when we had hoped to take in, to labor when we thought to rest, to postpone when we expected to achieve, and to do these things gladly and willingly for God and love's sake—this is to meet the requirements of the Christ life.—*S. White.*

Sunday, 30th. *The gifts . . . . of God. Rom. xi. 29.*

Though not a whole truth, the sentiment of a German poet is suggestive indeed: "What the gods give is neither good nor bad; the receiver first makes the gift." He makes it when he accepts it, and in the spirit in which he accepts it. God gives us free air, water, light, food, and the products and forces and beauties of nature, with infinite bounty. How often do we take them to our own destruction! We live by these things, then turn a large part of our lives into the devil's service. Thus we make the Divine gift an evil thing. Wonderful power this, that God's love has put into our perverse hands! Shall we make the gift good?—*Selected.*

Monday, 31st. *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John xv. 5.*

Too much taken up with our work, we may forget our Master; it is possible to have the hands full, and the heart empty. Taken up with our Master, we cannot forget our work; if the heart is filled with His love, how can the hands not be active in His service?—*Adolphe Monod.*

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.*

Rev. F. B. Meyer, B. A., D. D.

JOSHUA, PATRIOT AND LEADER.

(March 9, Josh. i. 1-9.)

March 3. Josh. i. 1-9.
March 4. Ex. xvii. 8-16.
March 5. Ex. xxiv. 12-18.
March 6. Num. xxvii. 15-23.
March 7. Deut. xxxi. 1-8.
March 8. Josh. i. 12-18.
March 9. Josh. v. 10-15.

As Joshua stood on the threshold of his great work, he was repeatedly bidden to "Be strong and of a good courage." Some little time before the death of his predecessor, a great convocation of all Israel had been summoned, at which Moses had solemnly transferred his office to his successor, and had given him a charge, saying, "Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land." And now the voice of God reiterates the charge and repeats the injunction.

May not this reiterated appeal indicate that the heart of Joshua misgave him, and that he was conscious of his utter inadequacy to fulfill the commission that was thrust upon him? Probably he had never dreamed of so high an honor, so vast a responsibility. He had been content to be Moses' minister, satisfied to wait below, while his master passed into the cloud to hold fellowship with God; staying in the tent to serve Moses if he were required, or in his absence to guard its contents; jealous for his master's honor, when Eldad and Medad prophesied; glad that all the glories of the conquest of eastern Palestine decked with laurels the closing days of the great leader.

When, therefore, the call came to him to assume the office which Moses was vacating, his heart failed him, and he needed every kind of encouragement and stimulus, both from God and man. "Be strong," means that he felt weak; "Be . . . . of . . . . good courage," means that he was affrighted; "Be not . . . . thou dismayed," means that he seriously considered whether he would not have to give up the task. He was a worm and no man: how should he deliver Israel? It is when men are in this condition that God approaches them with the summons to undertake vast and overwhelming responsibilities.

Let us consider the sources of Joshua's strength.

(1) A Faithful Past. In his case, as always, the eternal rule held good, that faithfulness in a few things is the condition of rule over many things; and the loyalty of a servant is the stepping-stone to the royalty of the throne. The previous years of Joshua's past had been full of high and noble endeavor. For forty years, if Josephus be correct in his statement as to his age at the death of Moses, he shared the slavery and sorrows of a captive race. His childish eyes must have become accustomed to witnessing the brutality of the Egyptian taskmasters, even if his own shoulders were not torn by their cruel whips. As a scion of one of the leading families of Ephraim (Num. xiii. 8, 16) he may have taken some leading part in the marshaling of the Exodus, and there approved himself as worthy of all trust. His conflict with Amalek; his good report of the land of promise; his refusal to take any part in the disastrous attack on the Canaanites; his eagerness for the good name and fame of Moses; his patient endurance of the weary years of wandering—all prove that his was no common character. This summons of Joshua to the leader's place in Israel was the guerdon of more than eighty years of faithful service.

(2) A Distinct Call. "Arise, go over this Jordan." Joshua's task was a very difficult one. The people of Canaan were well versed in the arts and sciences of the time, acquired from commerce with the Phœnicians on the north, and the Egyptians on the south. One of the most interesting discoveries of recent years has shown that the Hittites were a great peo-

*Owing to the failure of Dr. Meyer's "Studies" to reach us this month, we are obliged to omit the lesson for March 23, substituting for the remaining lessons "Studies" used in former issues.—Editor.

ple, highly cultured, and of sufficient importance to rival Assyria and Egypt. It seemed preposterous to suppose that a nation of a few years of existence was so soon to dispossess nations that had gained the country by conquest and were prepared to fight for every inch of territory by the most approved methods of warfare. It is clear that the reiterated assurance of God to settle Israel by means of Joshua, must have been a great source of strength to him.

The supreme inquiry for each of us, when summoned to a new work, is—not whether we possess sufficient strength or qualification for it, but—if we have been called to it of God; and when that is so there is no further cause for anxiety. If it is in His plan that we should march through a river, or attack a walled town, or turn to flight an army, we have simply to go forward. He will make the mountains a way. Rivers will dry up; walls will fall down; armies shall be scattered as snow in Salmon. There is no such thing as impossibility, when God says, "Forward, soul: arise, go over this Jordan!"

(3) The Sense of the Presence of God. "As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." There was one particular in which Joshua would always come far behind his great predecessor. Both were in necessary and constant communication with God; but Joshua had to seek counsel through the high priest, whereas Moses had enjoyed direct intercourse with God speaking unto him "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Still, Joshua, the son of Nun, was equally sure of the personal companionship of his great Ally, though he lacked the direct vision.

All through the arduous campaign that followed, nothing could daunt Joshua's courage, whilst that assurance was ever ringing its silver tones in the belfry of his memory—"I will be with thee." Ah, it is well when we can so encourage ourselves in God! Who can wax faint-hearted whilst He holds the right hand, saying, "Fear not, I am with thee"!

(4) The Indwelling of the Word of God. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night." Words pass on to men the heroic thoughts which thrilled the souls of those who spake them first. There are words, as there are strains of music, which cannot be uttered without nerving men to dare and to do, to attempt and to achieve. A woman will be strong to wait and suffer for long years in the strength of a sentence spoken by her lover as he parted from her. An army has before now forgotten sleepless nights and hungry marches in the stirring harangue of its general. And is not this what the prophet meant, when he said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart"; and what Jesus meant when He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"?

We must meditate on the words of God, because it is through His Word that the Spirit of God comes in fullness to be the mighty occupant of our inner man. This, after all, is the secret of strength—to be possessed of the strong Son of God, strengthened by His indwelling might, and filled by His Spirit.

Golden Text: *Josh. i. 9.*

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

(March 16, Josh. xx.)

March 10. Num. xxxv. 9-21.
March 11. Num. xxxv. 22-34.
March 12. Josh. xx. 1-9.
March 13. 1 Kings ii. 36-46.
March 14. Isa. xxviii. 14-22.
March 15. Heb. vi. 13-20.
March 16. Ps. xci.

It is desirable to read with this passage Num. xxxv. 9, etc. The distinction between murder and homicide is there made out very clearly; and the institution of the Refuge-cities was intended alone for those who were accused of the latter of these two offenses against human life. For the murderer there was short shrift; but for him that had the misfortune to cause his neighbor's death, but had borne him no grudge previously, there was interposed this chance of escape from the avenging goel. "If he thrust him of hatred, or hurled at him lying in wait, so that he died, he that smote him shall surely be put to death, for he is a murderer, the revenger of blood shall slay him when he meeteth him. But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or with any stone, without seeing him, so that he died, but he was not his enemy, nor hated him aforetime, the congregation shall

deliver him, and restore him to the city of refuge, whither he had fled." There was thus a second chance for the man charged with homicide.

Two men might be hewing wood in the forest, and the axehead of one of them might slip from the helve and strike the other so that he died; then without a moment's hesitation the unfortunate cause of his brother's death must leave home and business and flee for his life along the road to the nearest city of refuge. If he were but a few yards from the gate he might be struck down by the avenger's hand and killed. "The avenger of blood would pursue the manslayer, with hot haste, and might overtake him because the way was long." He would be at liberty to smite him mortally, although he was not worthy of death, as he had not hated the dead man in the past. (See Deut. xix. 1-10.)

In lands that are sparsely settled, and where the institutions of justice are in a primitive condition, where there are no local magistrates, and no police, the avenging of crime has to be left to private hands, and the nearest of kin becomes responsible to avenge his brother's blood. Such a man was known as the goel, the next of kin. (See Ruth iii., iv.; also Job xix. 25, marg.)

For every sin there is a just recompense of reward; but the just Judge holds a sword, which is quick, and powerful, and sharp in its two edges, and pierces to discern and discriminate between the thoughts and intents of the heart. Where a sin is unpremeditated, where a man is overtaken in a sudden fault, where there is no symptom of evil intention, we are dealt with very differently from when we have deliberately and intentionally plotted and executed some unholy deed. This constituted the difference between the sin of Peter, who denied Christ on the impulse of the hour, and Judas, who betrayed Him after long waiting for his opportunity.

The roads to the cities of refuge were kept in good repair. All along the line of route signposts were erected and maintained, pointing in the direction of the city, so that the fugitive need not hesitate for a moment. He dared not falter in his rush for life, because the avenger might be on his track, and close behind. When once inside the city he was safe. The disappointed pursuer might be only six paces behind, but he had no right to touch the fugitive. The elders of the city were commanded to find a place where he might dwell in safety, until the whole case was laid before the congregation. If it were proved to be a case of willful murder, even the Refuge-city could not protect him; but if it were clearly a case of homicide, the fugitive might dwell within the city, until the death of the high priest, when he could return to his own possession. Did he, however, presume to go outside the city walls before that event, he might be instantly struck down, without hope of redress.

This institution is full of evangelical instruction and warning for those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. vi. 18). For those who sin in cold blood, with deliberate intention, so long as they remain in this state of mind, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. x. 26-27); but for those who are ignorant and out of the way there is abundant mercy, and a path of refuge that they may enjoy strong consolation, being defended by the oath and council of God. (See also Mark iii. 28-30; 1 John v. 16.)

It has been supposed that the names of these cities were specially intended to set forth certain traits and attributes of Jesus Christ, Who is Himself our great Refuge-city.

Kedesh was situated in the north, and means *Holy*. In the New Testament holiness is derived from consecration, but in the Old it has the idea of "the filled hand." Either sense will serve us. Our Lord is Holy, He was sent into the world and *sanctified, i.e.,* set apart for God's high purposes, to which also He consecrated Himself (John x. 36; xvii. 19); and He is *"full* of grace and truth." We also must be wholly surrendered to Him, and filled with His Holy Spirit.

Shechem was situated in the center of Canaan, and means *Shoulder*. We are reminded of Isa. ix. 6. The government of our lives must be placed upon the shoulders of Christ, before we can enter into His Peace, which has no end. This is where

so many mistake. They are desirous to have Christ as Saviour, but are not prepared to surrender to Him as King, and are necessarily and inevitably disappointed. No refuge will avail the soul that lives in habitual defiance of the rule of Christ. The Father has put Him on the throne, far above all power and every name that is named, and we must concede a like position in the inner empire of the heart. It was near Shechem that Christ opened springs of eternal life in the heart of the outcast of Sychar: let Him do as much for you.

Hebron was in the south. It means *Fellowship*. We are reminded of 1 Cor. i. 9 and 1 John i. 1, 2, 3. It is in fellowship with Jesus Christ, our living Head, maintained by the perpetual energy of the Holy Spirit, that we are safe. If we wander outside the limits and precincts of that blessed fellowship, we expose ourselves to immediate overthrow. However much the enemy of souls may hate us, he is rendered absolutely helpless so long as we abide in Christ.

Bezer was in the south also, but on the other side of the Dead Sea. It means *Fortification* or *Stronghold*. The soul that has fled for refuge is in a double line of defense. The Saviour says, "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," and adds, "My Father . . . . is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John x. 28-29). How safe we are, whose "life is hid with Christ in God"! We dwell in the "secret place of the most High." Our place of defense is the Munitions of Rocks (Col. iii. 1-4; Ps. xci. 1).

Ramoth was situated in Gilead, still on the eastern bank of Jordan, and corresponded to Shechem on the western. It means *Exalted*, and we are recalled to Acts ii. 32; iii. 13. The Exalted Lord has all power in heaven and on earth, and therefore we are safe. All the power of the enemy is beneath Him.

Golan in Bashan towards the north, corresponded to Kedesh on the other side of the river. It means *Joy*. Our Lord was anointed with the oil of joy above His fellows, because He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Similarly, those who shelter in Him are full of joy. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, ... and . . . . we joy in God, ... by whom we have now received the atonement." Life inside the Refuge-city is very happy. There is no sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things are passed away. Joy is at the flood of the river, and at the full noontide of the day. Let us abide in Him forever, in Whom alone is eternal salvation.

Golden Text: *Matt. v. 7.*

GOD'S HAND IN A NATION'S LIFE.

(March 30, Josh. xxiv. 14-28.)

March 24. Ex. i. 6-14.
March 25. Ex. xv. 1-11.
March 26. Ex. xvi. 13-21.
March 27. Ex. xx. 1-17.
March 28. Josh. i. 1-9.
March 29. Josh. xxiii. 5-14.
March 30. Josh. xxiv. 22-33.

Fourteen years after the conquest of Canaan, and about seven from the distribution of the land among the tribes, Joshua felt that his end was approaching, and in the first instance, convened the officers and representatives of the people at Shiloh. An account of this memorable gathering is given in the previous chapter.

A final gathering was held, as described in this chapter, when the entire congregation, or at least all that could assemble, were summoned to meet their venerable leader at Shechem, under the ancient oak or terebinth, beneath which Jacob had buried the idols and charms found in his family (Gen. xxxv.). It may be that to give special solemnity and impressiveness to the occasion, the Ark of the Covenant was brought from Shiloh, and it is to this that reference is made in the first verse, "they presented themselves before God."

Joshua then briefly recapitulated the salient features of the past, bringing out the evidences of the Divine goodness to Israel, and insisting that they were indebted for their national existence, and for their peculiar privileges, not to any merits of their own, but to the free grace of God. At the close of this enumeration, he turned to ask that they should declare, in the most solemn manner, their intention and resolve to be faithful and obedient to Jehovah.

What followed may be divided into a Fourfold Challenge on the part of Joshua, and of Reply on the part of the congregation.

The First Challenge. "Now therefore

fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River (*i.e.*, the Euphrates), and in Egypt." There is a clear indication in these words that hitherto there had been a good deal of secret idolatry among the people, from the earliest days of their national existence, and after the manner of surrounding nations. Jacob's wife had harbored her father's teraphim in her camel's baggage, and Laban was convicted of their use (Gen. xxxi.). The patriarch had urged his household and all that were with him to put away their strange gods, and he had buried them under that very oak (Gen. xxxv. 2-4). But they had come again, apparently, into general use, as the result of the debasing associations of Egypt, where the people neglected the Sabbath, and assimilated closely to the corrupt civilization that surrounded them. Even whilst Sinai was thundering forth its announcements of the unity and spirituality of God, the germs of idolatry were present among the people, as the black spores of blight *(smut)* are present in the cornfields, awaiting favorable conditions for their manifestations, and only restrained by the genial heat of the August sun.

This is the natural tendency of the human heart. It needs something sensible and tangible, which it can appreciate as an outward embodiment of God. Nor is God indifferent to this longing, for has He not given Himself to us in the Son of His love—the Man, Christ Jesus? "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us and we beheld his glory." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." The word *idol* is almost an exact reproduction of the Greek word, which means *something that can be seen:* and the Lord Jesus is the visible appearance of the infinite God. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," because Jesus Christ is the Divine Man in the midst of the throne. Find God in Him, and worship Him there.

The appeal of Joshua was a very wise one. It lay at the beginning of spiritual religion. Even though the people did not violate the first item of the decalogue, to violate the second was a bar on their true development. Alas, however, many centuries were to pass before the love of idols was burnt out of the people by bitter sorrows and repeated trials. Reformations, led by men like Josiah and Hezekiah, and consummated by the exile in Babylon, were needed to complete their deliverance.

THE FIRST RESPONSE. Joshua gave the people choice between the gods of Babylon, which Terah and Laban served beyond the Euphrates (ver. 2-14), and the gods of the Amorites, as the only alternative if they would refuse the service of Jehovah. But the people were unanimous in their determination to follow him and his house in serving the Lord. "God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods." And yet within a few years, we have the sad record of Judges ii. 12. It was with them as indeed it is with us all—we recognize that God has brought us out of the land of the enemy and made us His own; we are conscious that His grace has given us a name and a place among His children; but we do not realize that the grace which made must keep us, and that it requires as much of the mighty power of God to maintain us in holiness and righteousness as to bring us out of darkness and rebellion. Only the Holy Spirit can maintain for us that love, that power, that devotion to God, that prayerfulness of spirit, which we acknowledge as our ideal, but which mocks our unaided strength.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE. "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins." It would almost seem as though God refused their first offers of service; but it was not really so. Joshua, in the Divine name, bade them pause, bade them sit down and count the cost, bade them consider how absolutely unable they were to meet all the demands which so holy a Being must needs make on them, as the prerequisite of all true fellowship with Himself.

Yes, God is holy; and it is not possible for us to walk with Him, save in the name and righteousness of the Lord Jesus. Our best efforts, compared with His holy nature, are as twilight compared with noontide. It is needful, therefore, that the blood of Jesus Christ should cleanse constantly and effectually from all sin, not only as *we* see

it, but as *He* sees it. But when we are in Christ, the Divine jealousy turns against our sins. "The spirit which he made to dwell in us yearneth for us even unto jealous envy" (Jas. iv. 5). Only yield to God, until, like fire, the Holy Spirit shall rid you of all that vexes and grieves Him.

Do not play at religion! Be everything or nothing! Do not lie between two opinions! If you cannot and will not pay the full price, do not profess to be a Christian, else you bring shame on God and awful judgment on yourself. Remember the fate of Ananias and Sapphira his wife. But if you will be only and absolutely for God, how gladly you will be welcomed!

The Second Response. "And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we *will* serve the Lord."

The Third Challenge. "And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord, to serve him."

It is a solemn moment in the soul life when it definitely elects Christ as King. Before King Edward VII was crowned, all the peers and peeresses waited with their coronets in their hands, but as soon as the Archbishop placed the crown on his head, each of them put on the golden circlet glittering with jewels, and immediately the Abbey shone with myriads of electric lights. Is not this emblematic of the joy which comes into life when the soul crowns its rightful Monarch? All its faculties are instantly crowned with a new royalty, and glow with a fresh brilliance. See to it that you choose "the Lord to serve him"!

The Third Response. From thousands of throats, and with a thunder of acclamation came the response, "We are witnesses."

The Fourth Challenge. "Now therefore put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel." What is it that intercepts your love and faith, that stands between God and you, that monopolizes your faith and love? Let it be put away.

The Fourth Response. "And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken."

Deeper than the clamor of the world, the voices of our advisers and even the tones of our own heart, there is one deep voice, which the sheep know as the Shepherd's. We hear it when we are in sorrow, when we are amid exquisitely lovely natural scenes, or when the heart is called to live for a little on the borderland between Time and Eternity. "My sheep hear my voice, and they know me, and follow me."

So the covenant was made; and witnessed by the great stone in Shechem. It was necessary in those days to associate great religious acts with some permanent object, by which their remembrance might be recalled at sight. There were no daily papers, no historical records. So many of us still can associate with certain spots transactions between ourselves and God, the memory of which will remain with us while life shall last.

Golden Text: *Prov. xiv. 34.*

GOD OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

(April 6. Gen. i. 27; Ps. ciii. 1-14; Matt. vi. 24-34.)

March 31. Matt. vi. 24-34.
April 1. Matt. vi. 1-15.
April 2. Gen. i. 24-31.
April 3. Ps. ciii. 1-14.
April 4. Eph. i. 1-14.
April 5. John xiv. 6-21.
April 6. 2 Cor. vi. 14-vii. 1.

Here was the springtime of the world. All creation waited for the coming of its king—and he came fresh from God's hand. It may be that his body was evolved by long processes from the lowest forms of life; but there was a moment when, within the lanthorn, was placed the immortal spark of the soul, which this narrative describes as the inbreathing of the breath of God. However near to man's outward form may be the physical frame of apes, the gulf between the intelligence and moral nature of the man and those of the ape is immeasurable and impassable.

There are two accounts here, side by side. The first chapter, characterized by the use of the word *"God,"* is clearly one sacred tradition, sanctioned or indorsed by the Spirit of Inspiration: the second and third chapters, characterized by "Lord *God,"* are clearly another tradition. The former seems to contain the Divine ideal, the original draught-scheme of the Creator; the latter shows how that fair ideal was dashed and spoilt by the intrusion of sin, which is self-ness, egoism of the worst type.

The Image of God in Man. "Whose is this image and superscription?" asked our Lord when they placed a Roman penny in His hand. "Cæsar's," they replied. However defaced and mutilated its surface may have been, it was impossible to miss the strong features, the low brow, the aquiline nose, the compressed lips, of the imperial line. So God stamped His image on man, the evidences of which have not been obliterated, though so many centuries of sin have succeeded. These traces of the Divine remain, like the ruined outlines of a temple long since given over to decay. They are apparent in poetry, or the sense of the beautiful; in music, which realizes the rhythmic beauty of the universe; in architecture, the passion to create; in the exactitude of arithmetic and mathematics; and in the conviction of the Unseen and Infinite. Most of all, the moral sense of right and wrong and the spiritual elements of our nature denote our lofty origin. Love is the same in God and in us. It is only thus that God is able to judge the world. Therefore also Paul, on Mars' Hill, proclaimed that "we are also his offspring." In Christ's nature that image was clear-cut and defined; and the work of the Holy Spirit is to renew us again in the image of Him that created us. (Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10.)

Man's Coronation. "Let them have dominion," etc. There is a school of thinkers who suppose that the malicious hatred of Satan arose because man was substituted for him, on the throne of the world. (See Ezek. xxviii. 11, *seq.*) But be that as it may, the two accounts agree in his original royalty. The first tells us that man was created to have dominion over all living things; and the second, that all the beasts stood before Adam to receive their names. These are two methods of asserting the same fact.

There are traces still of the original royalty of man, though sin rolled the crown from his head, and broke the chain of authority by which all living creatures were bound to allegiance. When a man enters a forest glade, all living things hush themselves and hide. The human voice causes all other voices to cease as in the presence of a king. Except where they have been exasperated by cruelty or hunger, wild beasts will not molest man; and there is no living creation that can resist the human eye. You may face a bull backwards down a field, without its daring to gore you. The ease with which man has tamed the domestic animals, is worshiped by his dog, and is able to catch and entrap all species of animals, so that they yield him feigned or real obedience, is another proof of the same proposition. Everywhere the creatures serve man. They provide him clothing, giving their wool or hides for that purpose. The feathers of his bed, the leather of his shoes, the horn of his implements, the silk of his robes, the ermine and sable of his winter costume are all supplied from the animal creation. They yield him meat, fowl, fish, milk, honey, butter, eggs, and scores of appetizing and nutritious articles of diet. No king is served by more loyal or unstinting service, sacrifice, surrender.

But man must needs have work to do. So God gave him a garden to dress and keep (ii. 15). Even Eden would not be Paradise unless each morning there was work to do, though not more irksome than to gather up the petals of overblown roses from the dewy lawns. To be healthy and happy as each dawn breaks on the world, men should go forth to their work until the evening. There was more of blessing than of a curse in the sentence, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." If man had spent an indolent existence in the infancy of the race, what could have emanated from the earliest seats of human life, but an unhealthy, anæmic and molluscous humanity, resembling the inhabitants of those South Sea Islands, where nature casts every indulgence into the lap and leanness corrupts the soul?

The Enthronement and Recrowning of our Race in Christ. In one of the Psalms the singer recapitulates the provinces over which man is called to rule. He insists in triumphant tones that man was made "to have dominion." "All things" were put "under his feet" by the fiat of the Creator. Not only sheep and oxen, but fish and fowl, were definitely handed over to his sovereignty. And in One at least the ideal was realized. The fish obeyed the commands of Jesus and thronged in silver crowds to fill the net on whichever side of

the ship He appointed. The colt, foal of an ass, bore Him into the city to His death. The wilderness of temptation attested His supremacy. And now, in His mediatorial glory, we are told that the ancient Psalm is fulfilled in Him. He sits at God's right hand. All things are under His feet. He is "crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9). In Jesus Christ, the Son of man, every line of God's original purpose is fulfilled. He is the Lord and King of all the creation, from seraphim down to the fireflies of the summer night, and the infusoria of the microscope. In union with Him the saints shall yet reign on the earth (Rev. v. 10).

When man fell under the power of his own self-life, the crown rolled from his brow. "We see not yet all things subjected to him" (Heb. ii. 8, R. V.). You have only to see men and women under the power of alcohol, or other sins, to be sure that, in spite of the marvelous advance of science, we are not the crowned and enthroned race that God intended. Wonderful triumphs over nature have been accomplished, but all is not done that must be done, and will be done, ere the programme of Gen. i. and Ps. viii. is realized. The whole material creation waits and groans for this (Rom. viii. 19-22).

Golden Text: *Matt. vi. 9.*

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS.

Ida Q. Moulton.

Proverbs xxiii. 29-35.

The Drink Trade.

For the sake of those who grow rich in body and poor in soul by it;
For the sake of those who grow poor in body and poor in soul by it;
For the sake of those kept poor in body and poor in soul by it;
For the sake of the fathers unfathered by it;
For the sake of the mothers unmothered by it;
For the sake of the children orphaned by it;
For the sake of those made murderer—. adulterer—thief—outcast by it;
For the sake of the flag it dishonors;
For the sake of the God it crucifies;
Let it die,
Lay it in the grave,
Cover it with the earth.

Then,

With the millions you have freed,
Arise and truly sing—
Of Liberty!

* * * * *

The president of the Associated Charities in Kansas City, Kans., thus describes the "distressing" (?) dilemma at the Carrie Nation Home, given by her for drunkards' wives. He said:

"It's no use denying it, the Home is a failure. We can't find any drunkards' wives to live in it. What is to be done about it? Nothing, so far as I can see. If our laws discourage the making of drunkards' wives, there isn't anything we can do. We have done our best, but the odds against us were too great. The property must be given back to her."

Would that such "distressing" conditions spread throughout every state of the Union!

* * * * *

In 1863, when the forces of the Confederacy were making their way Northward, steadily and relentlessly, Abraham Lincoln went upon his knees and promised God that he would free the slaves if the forces of the South were driven out of Pennsylvania. The Confederacy began to lose on the day the vow was made.

On the day the United States went to her knees and promised God as a nation that she would separate herself from the saloon and make national prohibition the supreme law of the land during the war—on that day came the first great victory of the American forces at Saint Mihiel. In view of the following statements, there is yet much more knee work to be done.

"One brewing association is to move to China, and will build a $2,000,000 plant there. A general exodus of the brewers to Asia is prophesied as the result of prohibition."

"In the hold of a four-masted schooner, there were noted 210,000 gallons of New England rum bound for the west coast of Africa."

Luke xii. 13-21.

Explorers tell us that in the Antarctic regions crevasses lie hidden beneath the snow, and very often the traveler does not know he is on one of them until he has traveled some yards when he hears a hollow sound. He will then wonder whether to go on or turn back, but experience has taught that the greater danger may be incurred by turning back. Some of these crevasses have been known to be 50 yards wide and 2000 feet deep. Captain Amundsen calls the treacherous snow which conceals the crevasses "The Devil's Hoof."

Envy is like unto these crevasses, in that unconsciously, we are led onward by it, till it issues its hollow-sounding mandates, when it is ofttimes too late to retreat.

* * * * *

Among the recent additions to the Old Mystic Museum in New London, Conn., is a whale louse from Greenland, one of the most wonderful and fatal destroyers known. Only about two inches in diameter and one inch thick, it attaches itself to the fin or fluke of a whale and the agony drives the whale ashore, where it dies unless able to detach the parasite. The specimen in the Museum was taken from a whale estimated to weigh over one hundred tons, that met its death in that way. We gather from the explicit emphasis which Christ Himself puts on covetousness that it is as deadly as the whale louse.

* * * * *

Not long ago, several legislative bribe takers in a western state were caught in the following manner: By a prearrangement, the grafters were taken to a certain room in a hotel where there was a couch beneath which was placed a dictagraph. A wire was carried into an adjoining room beneath the floor back of the couch. In the next room at the receiving end of the delicate instrument sat a detective making record of the incriminating conversation of the legislators. No one is ever safe when controlled by the twin *dis*graces of envy and covetousness. We may conceal their workings from the eyes of the world, but "Thou God seest me" is stamped upon every move they make.

1 Corinthians iii. 10-17.

C—onsecrated common sense.
H—umility—from which all virtues shoot.
A—spirations—without which man is a "poor stick."
R—esolution—to rise above the petty things of life.
A—cceptance of the inevitable things of life, not as a Stoic but as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
C—heerfulness. For

"'Tis no use to be glum, boys,
'Tis written since fighting begun,
That sometimes we fight and we conquer,
And sometimes we fight and we run."

T—horoughness. The world needs to get often—not the slackers but the slacknesses left in the wake of the best of us.
E—arnestness; for in character-building there is nothing impossible if we bring an earnest will to bear hard upon it.
R—eligion—not because your work will always demand it, but because you will.
S—elf-denial all the way through, not alone for the frescoes, but the underpinning also.

These are some things of which character is made.

* * * * *

A poor, uneducated cook won to Christ some of the best-educated people of her village. She had a simple personal story of salvation to tell which accorded with the Gospel story, and by all it was agreed that her character confirmed the truth of her story. "I would," said A. J. Gordon, "that every Christian take for his guidance the motto of Bengel, 'Apply thyself wholly to the Scriptures and apply the Scriptures wholly to thyself.' No other plans are needed, no other materials are desired in the art of character-building than the application of the Scriptures to our daily lives."

* * * * *

When someone asked J. Pierpont Morgan, "Is not commercial credit based primarily upon money or property?" he replied, "No, sir. The first thing is character."

"Before money or property?"

"Before money or anything else. Money cannot buy it. I know men who have

nothing, and yet can borrow all the money they want, because people believe in them. Men have come into my office who, I knew, had not a cent in the world, and I *have given them* a check for a million dollars."

* * * * *

A newspaper relates that not so very long ago three men in South Boston, after posing for a traveling photographer, refused to pay for the pictures, beat the photographer and tried to smash the camera, then ran away laughing at their "big joke." But they forgot the undeveloped plate in the camera, which the artist developed and turned over to the police,—a telltale bit of paper which soon caught the men in the grip of the law. Character never fails to take its own picture. Sometime it will be developed, according to the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," or, your sin *has* found you out. Which shall it be?

Matthew xxvii. 11-26.

A sailor lad just after his conversion went to a Christian man and said: "I want you to write some words for me on a card. You can do it better than I."

"What shall I write?"

"Write these words, sir: 'I love Jesus; do you?'"

The gentleman wrote them, and then said, "What are you going to do with the card?"

The sailor replied:

"I am going to sea to-morrow, and I am afraid if I do not take a stand at once, I may begin to be ashamed of my religion, and let myself be laughed out of it altogether. Now as soon as I walk on board I shall go straight to my bunk and nail up this card up on it, that every one may know I am a Christian, and may give up all hope of making me ashamed or afraid of standing for Christ."

The young man and his card won ten others to Christ on that voyage.

* * * * *

The story has been told of a soldier who was missed amid the bustle of a battle, and no one knew what had become of him, but they knew that he was not in the ranks. As soon as opportunity offered, the officer went in search of him, and to his surprise found that the man had been amusing himself in a flower garden during the battle. When it was demanded what he did there, he excused himself by saying, "Sir, I am doing no harm." But he was tried, convicted and shot. "Curse ye Meroz" (Judges v. 23). "And why?" asks one, "What had they done? Had they taken up arms against Jehovah?" No. They had done *nothing*. Neutrality was their crime. "They came not . . . . to the help of the LORD against the mighty." Neutrality is like giving the stock of a gun to one man and the barrel to another; the effect is *nil*.

Mark xi. 19-26.

When Samuel J. Mills told his father he was going to be a missionary, the father said, "You shall not." As neither would yield, after talking matters over they agreed to call a council of the most godly men they knew. The council was called, and the first prayer was offered by a plainly dressed, blunt old man, in these words, "Almighty God, Thou knowest that Thy servant Mills consecrated this boy to Thy service in his youth, and now that the boy wants to preach the Gospel to the heathen Thy servant Mills is mad. Amen." When they got up from their knees, "Thy servant Mills" said, "He can go."

"Now I notice," said one, "that if we put the thing that troubles us before God straight the whole difficulty solves itself. It is when we go to the Lord beating around the bush that we become confused, and say, 'I don't know where the path of duty lies.'"

* * * * *

Samuel Morse marked a new era when with dots and dashes he sent communications across the continents. Cyrus Field marked another new era when he sent messages from continent to continent beneath the ocean waves. Graham Bell marked a new era when he made it possible to hear the voices of loved ones within the radius of hundreds of miles. Marconi marked still another new era when he found a way to drop messages from the skies—but what are all these wonderful achievements compared to the new era Jesus Christ marked with five simple words, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," providing a way for the

heart of humanity and the heart of the Lord of the universe to hold sweet communion?

* * * * *

The following is the way one business man looks upon his prayer relations to God.

"Teach me that 60 minutes make an hour, 16 ounces make a pound and 100 cents a dollar. Help me to live so that I can lie down at night with a clear conscience without a gun under my pillow, unhaunted by the fear of those to whom I have brought pain. Grant that I may earn my meal ticket on the square. Deafen me to the jingle of tainted money. Blind me to the faults of the other fellow and reveal to me mine own. Guide me so that each night when I look across the dinner table at my wife I will have nothing to conceal. Keep me young enough to laugh with my children. And when come the smell of flowers and the tread of soft steps and the crunching of wheels out in front, make the ceremony short, and the epitaph, 'Here lies a man.'"

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

MARCH, 1919.

Saturday, 1st. Luke iv.

"He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted" (ver. 18). A broken heart is a very common thing at the present day, perhaps commoner now than it ever was in the world's history. Science has to a great extent conquered physical pain, but science has done nothing to diminish mental pain. So there are many reasons why hearts are broken.

I. Broken by Grief. There is grief, natural grief, perhaps we may call it grief which comes upon us, which we all expect must come upon us when the parent dies, and we are left without those we love in this cold world.

II. Failure. The world of youth is a glorious world of sunshine and of bright visions, and those visions fade as youth fades, and then the world is gray, like some December day.

III. Sin. There are some whose hearts are broken by sin, sin of themselves or of some other. Yes, their shame is rightly suffered, but the thought that this shame could have been avoided adds poignancy to the pain.

To the simple the truth appears in all its simplicity that Christ came to heal the broken heart. Christ healed the broken heart by taking sorrow on Him. He trod the road first, and the simple with grateful hearts tread it after Him. They ask no reason why He created sorrow, they ask no reason why Christ had to suffer, they merely feel that they are planting their footsteps where Christ trod, and that His Divine sympathy enfolds them, and their hearts ache no longer as their mind dwells on His sorrow and His love.

The Christ coming on earth assured us that our God was One of infinite pity. Before His coming the world knew God as a Being of infinite power, but not of infinite beauty. His all-embracing love was yet unknown to man. Till he heard of God taking upon Himself the form of man, and by the sacrifice of the Cross showing that infinite love in infinite self-sacrifice, the mystery of His love was hid from man; but when He entered in triumph into heaven He threw open wide the gates of heaven and showed the wondrous beauty of the Godhead. Poverty, shame, sorrow, disappointment, failure, have henceforth another meaning to the Christian.—*Selected.*

Sunday, 2nd. Luke v.

"We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing" (ver. 5). That was not the first vain night by a good many that they had spent on the Sea of Galilee. Mind you, these men were no novices. They knew their business. They had known the Galilean Sea from their boyhood—all its moods and tempers, its dangers and its possibilities. The story of their bread-winning life had been told upon its waters. They were experts, and their boat was empty. They had worked hard and worked wisely, and the sea had beaten them. In spite of the instincts and love of a lifetime on its waters, it can send a man ashore with an empty boat.

And on the greater sea where you and I do our work the same story is ever being told. It is a difficult story to understand. It is beyond us all. The failure of the foolish, the incompetent and the lazy is a foregone conclusion. But how often do we see the wise, strong, earnest, capable souls coming from their toils with nothing to show!

Success and failure are deep and inward things. No surface judgment ever truly

appraises them. The world reads failure in an empty boat. God reads failure in an empty heart. "We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing." Well, what of that? That is no tragedy if you can say, "We have toiled all night, and have lost nothing." This is where you begin to see right into the heart of the worker's failure—not the thing he did not win, but the thing he did lose. Hopelessness, indifference, weak despondency, foolish desperation, cynical unbelief, these are the things that go to make real failure. It is not our ignorance and clumsiness that baffle the Almighty—it is our despair.

The men who succeeded were the men who had failed. Failure is not a standing disability in the service of the kingdom. In the world it is sometimes a final disqualification, an unpardonable sin. The world says to the failures: "Stand aside and let someone else try. You have had your chance. Now make room for a better man." He is always a better man, this man who has not tried. The world is quite agreeable that the boat should be launched again, but it stipulates for a different crew. And some are too ready to accept the stipulation and drop out. I wonder how many ministers last year received at least one note from a steward, a leader, a Guild secretary, containing the phrase, "Let someone else try." Note the way of Jesus. "Launch out," you men who but lately came ashore with empty nets.—*P. C. Ainsworth.*

Monday, 3rd. Luke vi.

The kingdom of God is, essentially, the absolute dominion of God in the universe, both in a physical and spiritual sense. It is "an organic commonwealth which has the principle of its existence in the will of God." It was foreshadowed in the Jewish theocracy. The idea of the kingdom advanced toward clearer definition from Jacob's prophecy of the Prince out of Judah (Gen. xlix. 10), through David's prophecy of the everlasting kingdom and the King of righteousness and peace (Ps. lxxii.), through Isaiah, until, in Daniel, its eternity and superiority over the kingdoms of the world are brought out strongly. For this kingdom Israel looked with longing, expecting its realization in the Messiah; and while the common idea of the people was narrow, sectarian, Jewish, and political, yet "there was among the people a certain consciousness that the principle itself was of universal application." In Daniel this conception is distinctly expressed (vii. 14-27; iv. 25; ii. 44). In this sense it was apprehended by John the Baptist.

The ideal kingdom is to be realized in the absolute rule of the eternal Son, Jesus Christ, by Whom all things are made and consist (John i. 3; Col. i. 16-20), Whose life of perfect obedience to God and Whose sacrificial offering of love upon the Cross reveal to men their true relation to God, and Whose spirit works to bring them into this relation. The ultimate idea of the kingdom is that of "a redeemed humanity, with its divinely revealed destiny manifesting itself in a *religious* communion, or *the Church;* a *social* communion, or *the State;* and an *æsthetic* communion, expressing itself in forms of knowledge and art."

The kingdom is both *present* and *future*. As a present kingdom it is incomplete and in process of development. It is expanding in society like the grain of mustard seed (Matt. xiii. 31, 32); working toward the pervasion of society like the leaven in the lump (Matt. xiii. 33). God *is* in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and the Gospel of Christ is the great instrument in that process (2 Cor. v. 19, 20). The kingdom develops from within outward under the power of its essential Divine energy and law of growth, which insures its progress and final triumph against all obstacles. Similarly, its work in reconciling and subjecting the world to God begins at the fountain-head of man's life, by implanting in his heart its own Divine potency, and thus giving a Divine impulse and direction to the whole man, rather than by moulding him from without by a moral code. The law is written in his heart. In like manner the State and the Church are shaped, not by external pressure, like the Roman Empire and the Romish hierarchy, but by the evolution of holy character in men. The kingdom of God in its present development is not identical with the Church. It is a larger movement which includes the Church. The Church is identified with the kingdom to the degree in which it is under the power of the spirit of Christ. "As the Old Testament kingdom of God was perfected and completed when it ceased to be external, and became internal by being enthroned in the heart, so, on the other hand, the perfection of the New Testament kingdom will consist in its complete incarnation and externalization; that is, when it shall attain an outward manifestation, adequately expressing, exactly corresponding to its internal principle." The consummation is described in Rev. xxi., xxii.—*Marvin R. Vincent.*

Tuesday, 4th. Luke vii. 1-10.

Ver. 5. There are many striking features about the character of this Roman soldier; he is one of the most attractive, noble, and lovable men in the pages of the New Testament. There are mainly three points in his character to be carefully marked.

I. His Susceptibility to All That is Good. He had come to Capernaum probably without any definite faith, with many a story in his mind about the fanat-

icism and stubborn pride of the people in whose country he had come to keep order, and he must have set himself at once to study the people and their religion, with the result that he saw the good in both. We could still do with more of the spirit that detects and rejoices in good in others, other nations, other religious communities. The chief feature, however, of this man's susceptibility, is that it is most tender towards that which is highest. I see in this centurion a man who is willing to be led by the Spirit of God and of truth, who dares at the bidding of the Spirit to be original, to do what is unusual and unfashionable, singular and strange, at the call of conscience, and this is the kind of man needed to-day.

II. His Lowliness. "I am not worthy," is his estimate of himself. You know the world's idea; you must assert your own worth, and insist on your rights being recognized and your efforts being properly acknowledged. If modesty is at a discount in the markets of the world, it should be at a premium in the Church of Christ. Let a Roman centurion teach us—"I am not worthy," that is the language for all of us, for some more than others, but for us all. Not lip language, not affectation; there is no more degraded and disgusting character in fiction than Uriah Heep. But the real thing—oh, that we had more of it! Lowliness of mind is the sure sign of saintliness; every true saint is lowly.

III. His Faith. His is a faith which surprises our Lord. It is a part of the susceptibility to the Divine which dwelt in him. It is to be feared that there are many people professing the Christian faith who would be put to shame by the simple and complete confidence in Christ's power displayed by the centurion. Lowliness and faith go together. The proud and self-sufficient temper will make its own power and wisdom the gauge and standard of what God can do, and will probably refuse to believe in anything that it cannot understand. The man who truly sees God will be stricken through with a sense of his own unworthiness; but he will believe at the same time in the illimitable power of God. I do not want to be put to shame by the faith of this Roman soldier. I observe that our Lord acclaimed it and declared that it was the greatest He had found.—*Charles Brown.*

Wednesday, 5th. Luke vii. 11-50.

Ver. 28. The Bible is a Book of biographies. All genuine biography is worthy of our careful study. The life of John the Baptist is especially profitable and especially instructive, perplexing and mysterious though it be. Let us consider the practical side of the prophet's life, and let us see how it will help you and me to be better men, and to be truer to our convictions and our God.

In the first place, let us consider the Baptist as a man. We notice three characteristics which seem to set him forth as a great man. (1) His spirit was fearless, brave, courageous. It does not require much courage or bravery to denounce sin, in general and vague terms, in the congregation or in the assembly, but it does require courage to speak face to face—honestly and truthfully—to those who are in our own position, and, above all, to those who are set in authority over us. Now, John the Baptist not only rebuked sin amongst the poor and the degraded, amongst the publicans and the profligates, but he rebuked sin upon the throne itself. (2) But this man was great not only because of his fearless courage, but because of his transparent truthfulness. It is sincerity and truthfulness that give power to all men's works and words and lives. You may be as eloquent as Cicero, as great an orator as Demosthenes, but unless men believe in your sincerity and truthfulness, all that you say to them is of no avail—it is tainted with self, with conceit, with the things of earth, and it is not the truth of God. I once heard a young man say at a public meeting, "Not by man's preaching, but by my mother's 'practicing' was I won from atheism to God." (3) And, then, his moral greatness was not only seen in his bravery and sincerity, but also in his humility. Of his own greatness he was utterly unconscious.

Again, let us look at the preacher. The great theme of his preaching was this; that reality lies at the root of all religion. So he preceded the great Builder and Founder of the Church, that he might hew down with his axe all the rottenness and insincerity of that Jewish Church, and his appeal was, "Bring forth . . . . fruits,"—*i.e.,* show that your repentance is genuine. And is there no necessity to-day for this proclamation? Ah, how men and women will talk in a sentimental way of their sins!

Then think of John as a martyr. It is one thing to be brave for the truth when it is popular and pleasant, but it is another thing to be true to your convictions when it means disgrace and death. Your truthfulness is genuine just as far as you are prepared to suffer for it; to suffer for it in this life, that you may attain the life of God hereafter.—*T. J. Madden.*

Thursday, 6th. Luke viii. 1-15.

We have here, first of all, the Christian work described. It is *sowing.* But sowing is not the first agricultural process. The soil in its natural state will not receive the good seed and bring forth fruit. There are the primeval forests to be cleared, there is the tangled undergrowth of thorns

and briers to be removed. And then the plowman must come with his share and break up the soil before ever there can be any harvest from the seed. "A sower went out to sow his seed." Not a pioneer with his axe, not a plowman with his share, but a sower with his seed basket scattering his seed. And why? Because this is preëminently the work of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There was pioneer work to be done; that was done by the iron plowshare of the law; that came first. And then, again, it is not merely that the Gospel work is this gentle work of the sower, but the sower gives to the earth that which it had not before; he gives life, he gives that which has life in itself, and which can produce life, by which the mineral can be raised up into the vegetable. The seed, as it were, the Godhead coming down into this dead earth and raising it up into beauteous life. Now this, the function of the sower, is our function.

Notice the *loneliness* of this sower. *"A* sower." Contrast the loneliness of the sower with the sociability of the reaper. The reapers go forth in bands, the sower goes forth alone. The great Sower was always a lonely Man. All the great sowers of the world have been lonely men.

Notice the *sphere* of the sower. "A sower *went out* to sow his seed." And you must go out. And this implies self-denial, it means leaving many comforts, many luxuries, it means going out into the darkness. There can be no real reaping until, first of all, there has been the sorrowful sowing.

The seed must be your own seed. *"His* seed." Not, of course, that he made it. He cannot make it; the seed is something which is far beyond his power. But it must be his seed, he must have toiled for it, it must be the fruit of his last year of labor; it is part of his brain, part of his hands' toil. And so it must be with ourselves. The seed must be ours. Have we this seed? Do we know something of this life-giving power of Jesus Christ? It is only thus that we can scatter the seed. God is calling out for sowers. We are told that when Captain Cook circumnavigated the world, he used to take with him parcels of our English seeds, and leaving his boat's crew down on the beach, he would go inland and empty out one of these packets of our common English seeds, so that he belted the whole world with these same flowers. So we have come into this world, and we want to scatter those seeds of heaven wherever we go.—*E. A. Stuart.*

Friday, 7th. Luke viii. 16-56.

Ver. 18. These words are the climax of Christ's discriminating study of those who listened to His Gospel. He has been explaining to His disciples the parable of the seed and the soil, and has told of the different classes to whom His Evangel comes and who receive it with such diverse result. In view of the dark possibility there is of men hearing and receiving His Word in such wise as to bring forth no abiding fruit in holiness of life and character, He warns them to take heed how they hear, and expresses in these sentences the inevitable end of a mere profession which is not verified in actual possession and present experience. There is a law which governs the permanence of all things in the realm of the moral and spiritual just as on lower planes. The *real* alone is abiding, the unreal is only transient. And this is the lesson which the Saviour enforces when He declares that that which a man only seems to have shall inevitably be taken away from him.

Christ is not here declaiming against mere hypocrisy, but is, rather, warning those who are in danger of self-deception. The hypocrite is one who endeavors to deceive others, but there are many who, though they are far from having such a desire, are nevertheless being themselves deceived as to the reality of the things which they imagine themselves to possess. Reality is one of the keynotes of the Gospel, nor is it too much to say that Christ sets greater store on reality in His followers than on any other possible attitude of heart. For reality conditions all things else, and He is ever seeking for the man who honestly "willeth to do his will." Such an one cannot but abide forever.

Whatever be the cause of self-deception, it is certain that a man's seeming possessions will be taken away from him. This law operates with regard to things material and spiritual alike, and it is only a matter of time and experience for a man to stand before his own conscience, naked and miserable, and blind and poor.

For life is made up of occasions of test, first among which are the tests of duty by which a man is tried. He imagines himself to be strong to do the right, but his strength is in reality only a sense which has grown within him by reason of the lack of test. Swiftly and suddenly the imperative voice of duty demands the application of the principles of Christ of which he has always thought himself to be master, on some level of life, to some phase of conduct, or regarding some attitude toward men and things, and he suddenly discovers that he is unable to obey the dictates of God and of conscience. The things which he seemed to have are suddenly taken from him. Blessed is the man who in that hour of self-discovery betakes him to the place of forgiveness and renewal, there to exchange that which has profited not, for the true and abiding riches.—*J. Stuart Holden.*

Saturday, 8th. Luke ix.

Ver 26. I can understand how men were ashamed of Christ as He moved about the villages of Galilee. Born in a humble and malodorous village, living in the deepest obscurity for thirty years, then suddenly appearing with a claim to be Messiah yet contradicting the warmest hopes of Israel, it is not to be wondered at that there was disappointment, and that many were ashamed of Jesus and His words. But the thing that is difficult to understand is how any man can be ashamed of Jesus now. The man who is ashamed credits that Christ is living and is energetic in human hearts to-day; and the mystery is how crediting all that, it should be possible to be ashamed of Christ. That it is possible every one of us knows, and it is on that strange possibility I wish to speak.

First, then, about its revelation, about the way in which this shame of Christ betrays itself; and (1) the first feature that rises before me is *concealment.* When you are ashamed of a man you are ashamed of being openly seen with him; and as that is a feature of all shame between man and man, it is a mark of the man ashamed of Christ. (2) The second feature of all shame is *silence.* The feeling of shame whenever it is operative has a way of putting a seal upon the lips. (3) The third witness of shame lies in *avoidance.*

What are the roots of this shame? Whence does it spring? It will be best to keep close to Scripture in our answer. (1) Sometimes we are ashamed of Christ through *fear.* We are ashamed as Nicodemus was. He came to Jesus by stealth and in the nighttime, and he came so because he feared the Jews. (2) Again the cause of this shame may be *social pressure.* We may be ashamed of Christ as Simon Peter was. Peter sat by the fire in the courtyard, and they taunted him with his discipleship; and then the girl who kept the wicket recognized him, and everyone present was antagonistic; and Peter denied his Lord—Peter was ashamed of Him—and the shame had its source in his society. (3) One other reason is *intellectual pride.* Men are ashamed of Christ because His message is so plain that the illiterate peasant can live by it and die by it.

What are the remedies for this besetting shame? (1) Endeavor to realize Who Jesus is. (2) And then endeavor to realize what Christ has done for you. When we once feel deeply all that we owe to Him, the black bat, shame, has flown.—*G. H. Morrison.*

Sunday, 9th. Luke x. 1-24.

Ver. 2. This is a short passage in which our Lord describes the condition of the masses of men, and the high duty and privilege of His disciples. The first thing to impress us, probably, is the definition of men which it gives. They are a harvest—or there is a harvest to be reaped from among them. And the harvest is going to waste and ruin because no one sees its value. Our Lord was teaching His disciples to look at men with His eyes. He saw the crowd and He said: "They are a flock that needs shepherding, a harvest that needs gathering. Tares are there, doubtless, but wheat also."

It is wonderful how He believed in men, what He saw in them. No one has ever believed in the golden possibilities lying in men as He did. No one has taught the rare worth of a human soul as He did. No one else would have seen what He saw in those men whom He picked up on the shores of the Lake of Galilee and chose to be with Him. To everybody else they were grain hardly worth gathering.

And now He seeks to impress His thoughts on us. We cannot fail to be struck with the wonderful fertility of human life; its resourcefulness, skill, power of endurance; what men will do and suffer, if you can furnish them with a sufficient motive or object. And our Lord saw, what the centuries have proved, that men were capable of doing, daring, suffering for His sake, and goodness' sake, more than for any other object. No one and no thing have ever created the enthusiasm, devotion, sublime heroism, and self-sacrifice which He has inspired. The harvest which was being reaped for self, for the world, for the devil, He saw could be reaped for God and goodness.

Observe how this harvest is to be gathered. By the labor of men. This is quite a commonplace, but a commonplace which needs to be insisted upon. Ever since the time of Isaiah, and long before, God has been calling, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The figure of the man with the scythe or sickle going out in the early morning, to work on through the burden and heat of the day, until the dews of night fall, in sweat of brow and skill of hand, is the figure which our Lord chooses to set forth what He would have His disciples do for the salvation of the world.

The disciples are not urged by the Lord to go and reap the harvest, but to pray to Him to Whom the harvest belongs that He will send forth laborers. There may be some mystery about this. Whatever it be, we are sure that He to Whom it belongs is not unwilling to gather the harvest. The remembrance that He gave His only begotten Son to die for the world forbids the thought. There are two things that appear to be clear from this exhortation. The first is, that if these men really prayed, they would think about the matter for which they prayed, and about the condition of

those on whose behalf prayer was offered. The other thing is, that those who went into the harvest, if the prayer were answered, would be sent of God, would go as His servants, and under His direction.—*Charles Brown.*

Monday, 10th. Luke x. 25-42.

The narrative of Christ's conversation with the Bethany sisters furnishes us with two sharply defined types of womanhood which we all recognize: (1) Martha is a woman who cannot bear to see any one unemployed. She is such a women as George Eliot has given us in Mrs. Poyser, such a woman as we ourselves have met many times, perhaps, in our observation of life. (2) But Mary seems sadly slight and inefficient beside this bustling, practical-minded sister of hers. Has she then no use or place in the world? The strange and wonderful things that alter and determine the movements of society are often effected by women of the type of Mary. It is only such a woman as Mary who could ever have dared to introduce Jesus to the hospitality of Bethany.

What, then, is the spirit of Christ's criticism of these two women? It is that bodily activity is not everything, that there is a spiritual nature which also demands attention, and that it is possible to be very energetic in body at the expense of the soul. The student of the truth is as needed as the soldier of the truth. Be as energetic as you will, but while you feed others, do not let your own soul starve.

So, then, out of this incident there emerges a principle—the principle that quiet may do as much for us as action, and that we may be doing most when we seem to be doing least. (1) Do we not see, for example, how true it is in our relation to Nature? He does not learn most of Nature who applies himself to the task with the hottest energy. (2) So, again, is it not true in all that relates to the culture of the mind? We commonly act as though we believed the mind could only grow by feverish processes of energy. We read everything, whereas it would be infinitely better for us if we read less and thought more. (3) Does not life itself perpetually illustrate the same truth? There are a hundred purposes and aims in life that seem precious to men and women only because they are showy and win immediate reward, and many seek them and lose the better part. (4) Or we may apply the suggestion to many other matters in the general ordering of our lives. Year by year we seek the calm and freshness of Nature, often rather as a physical duty than as a genuine delight. Do not grudge the hours that are given to that relaxed and unenergetic interval of calm. (5) Or the theme may find its application in relation to the worship of the sanctuary. Contemplation is the true spring of labor.—*W. J. Dawson.*

Tuesday, 11th. Luke xi. 1.

The disciples had all prayed many times, and yet they came to Jesus with this request. For they were not satisfied with their praying. Their hearts were full of longings for which they could not find utterance, and the silence in which they dwelt oppressed them. For answer, Jesus began by teaching them how *not* to pray. It may well be, that with such bad examples of devotion in their synagogues and streets, the very habits of devotion which they had formed were hampering them. The request itself may give a hint of this, as if prayer were an art which might be taught by rules. The Pharisees were past masters in the art of prayer, but, in Jesus' sense, they knew not how to pray at all. For prayer is not an art but a spirit, and when it has become an art it has ceased to be prayer.

The Lord's Prayer was not given as a ritual or formula of prayer to be superstitiously repeated. It was not even given as in any exhaustive sense a "model" prayer, for much is omitted from it which we shall often need to ask. It is, rather, fundamental than complete, setting for us on the one hand the broad and generous spirit of sympathy with our fellows and their life, without which devotion tends to self-indulgence; and on the other hand, selecting the elementary needs of men, bread for the body and purity for the soul.

That was His immediate answer, but He gave them two other answers to their request. *His example* taught them to pray. As they followed Him they saw that He, Who apparently needed least, yet prayed most of all men. The Syrians speak of the lamps of hermits shining through the night from far-seen hillside caves, as "hands folded in prayer." So the remembrance of the Master, withdrawn but not forgetting them, must often have made the day feel safe, and taken its terrors from the darkness. There could be no better defense than the prayers of Jesus.

But the greatest answer of all which Jesus gave to that request lay in the simple fact that He was Himself. There are some of our friends whose very presence is an influence upon us towards holy things. In their company we feel our souls drawn nearer to God, and we desire to pray. In the well-known picture of Satan watching the sleep of Christ, there is something wistful in the expression and attitude of the enemy, as if even over the foulest heart the Saviour had cast His spell. And the disciples found that as they lived with Jesus they turned instinctively towards God. Every hour of His company taught them

to pray. He brought them to their best, and wakened all their slumbering desires after God and holiness.—*John Kelman.*

Wednesday, 12th. Luke xi. 2, 3.

Ver. 3. What a gracious light this petition throws upon the *condescension of God!* Our Lord is the High and Holy One Who inhabits eternity, and yet He stoops to lowly folk and lowly things. Erasmus, the great sixteenth-century Grecian, thought a reference to physical food would be incongruous "in so heavenly a prayer." But far from being incongruous, the prayer becomes more gracious and beautiful because this petition for bread is in it! It is not too trivial a request to bring to God; for God is not a God simply for great crises, supreme emergencies, tremendous catastrophes; He is a God for every day, and for the common events of every day.

This prayer proclaims the fact of our dependence upon God for the very simplest of boons. It is a prayer for all, because all are absolutely dependent upon God. Nowhere is this utter dependence of man upon God more clearly seen than in the matter of daily bread. For all wealth in the last resort depends upon the produce of the soil. Man cannot make food. He cannot create bread. With all his knowledge of chemistry he cannot command a harvest. God must give it. And He gives the harvest year by year. Some things, as Dr. Dods remarks, God gives us once for all—our supply of coal and the various minerals and metals. But corn, food, bread, He gives us year by year, as if to emphasize the fact of our dependence upon Him.

Note the modesty and simplicity of the request made in this prayer. "Bread," that is what is asked for—the bare necessities of life. As T. T. Lynch quaintly puts it, "This is a prayer for daily *bread,* not for daily *cake.*" We are to pray for only as much of that as will suffice for the day, or meet our present needs.—*J. D. Jones.*

Thursday, 13th. Luke xi. 4.

Here we have the two great fundamental facts of the Gospel,—man's need of forgiveness, and God's willingness to bestow it.

Perhaps we are too apt to think of sin only in its effect upon ourselves. We shall never see sin in its naked horror, we shall never see it in its awful hatefulness until we look at it from another standpoint. We sin not against ourselves alone but *against God.* Even though sin entailed no loss to the sinner, involved no penalty, brought with it no curse, it would remain still utterly loathsome and hateful if we only realized that every sin of ours caused grief and pain to the heart of the eternal God, our loving Father in heaven. Now that is the point of view from which sin is regarded in this prayer. Matthew uses the word "debt." As Dr. Morrison says: "When we sin there is something in our act for which we become *liable* to God. Formerly He had a claim upon us; now He has a claim *against* us." The sins of our past history are included in this word "debt." "Debt" is something we *owe.* "Debtors" we all of us are. We have come short—we have given God less than His due, we are in debt to Him. Can we work it off in the days and years that are to come? I cannot hold out to you any hope of doing that.

Here is the Gospel in a nutshell. Something *can* be done. You can do nothing. I can do nothing, but God, the God against Whom we have sinned, He can do everything. He will cancel the debt. The wonder of the world still is that the God against Whom we have sinned is the One Who will take our sin away.

> All the souls that were, were forfeit once,
> And He that might the vantage best have took
> Found out the remedy.

That remedy was the Cross of Christ. There is nothing which His mercy cannot do. A poor criminal in Scotland, as he went forth to his place of execution, kept crying out: "He is a great Forgiver. He is a great Forgiver." Yes, He is a great Forgiver. And what was the price of pardon? It cost God the Death of His only Son. But what will it cost us?—it will cost us *nothing.* God does not sell. God *gives.* All that is required is that we should *ask* for it. Therefore He teaches us to pray "Forgive us our trespasses."—*J. D. Jones.*

Friday, 14th. Luke xi. 4-54.

"And bring us not into temptation" (ver. 4). "Forgive us our debts" is a prayer that God will blot out the record of *past* sin. "Bring us not into temptation" is a prayer for protection in the *future.* For the man who has truly repented of his sin wants not simply the past to be blotted out, but he wants grace to shun sin in the days to come. He wants not only to be delivered from the *penalty* of sin, but he also longs to be emancipated from its *power.*

This prayer recognizes the fact that this world is full of peril to the Christian, because it is full of temptation. The word translated *temptation* really means *testing, trial:* God does not "tempt" in the sense of inciting to evil; God *tests.* The presence of evil in our world, the incitements to evil that abound, looked at from God's standpoint are tests—tests of character, tests of moral strength. But these incitements to evil appeal to weakness and evil in our

own hearts, and so to us they become *temptations*. And of such temptations our world is full. Bunyan described the Christian life as a journey, but it is a journey through a very dangerous country. The old Greek legends speak of the sirens—creatures half-women, half-fish—who lived upon the rocks and could sing the most ravishing songs. So entrancing was the music that whoever heard it was irresistibly drawn to the singers. But it was woe to them; for the rocks whereon the sirens lived were strewn with the bones of dead men who had listened to their song and yielded to its fascination. That siren's song is still being sung, and every mariner on life's main hears it. The world, the flesh, and the devil are the sirens of to-day.

This verse implies the weakness of man. It is because we know our own weakness, it is because we know how liable we are to break down under any severe test that we pray "Bring us not into temptation." I can only discover One Man in the history of the whole world Who was proof against temptation, and that was the perfect Man, Christ Jesus Himself.

This petition illustrates the spirit of true Christian courage. True courage will keep away from danger; true courage will only incur risk and peril when duty demands. There is nothing sinful in being tempted. We sin only when we yield to temptation. No conflict need end in defeat.—*J. D. Jones.*

Saturday, 15th. Luke xii. 1-12.

Ver. 6, 7. That is a simple saying, and yet how deep! Could any illustration be more homely, more humdrum, more inadequate, or commonplace? And yet Jesus Christ takes it for the purpose of expressing His conception of the substance and soul of our human life—what its contents are; what is the infinite care that is over it and through it, over the whole of it, and through the whole of it, even to its minutest details! And then He shows, by the turn He gives it, to what mighty courage and patient devotion men may be inspired who accept His view of life.

What, then, is His interpretation of this complex and bewildering thing we call the world? It is, in brief, that human life is not a weltering chaos but a well-ordered family in a graciously ruled world. This universe is a home. God is Father and Mother. We are the children of His family.

What, then, is it makes the home? There are four responses that we can give to that inquiry. (1) First of all, the vital factor of the home is the parental. Jesus claims the home as the true type of our human life, and He gives new meaning to the word "God" when He represents Him as Father and Mother of this home. It is the glory of our Christianity that it has given us a new conception of the word "Father" and that it has authentically applied it to God. (2) What makes the home? Lift the shutter and look through the window at the family, and you recognize at once that the spirit of the home is love, self-sacrifice, devotion on the part of mother and father to the care and welfare, the discipline and upbringing of the children. The spirit that rules the life of man is the spirit of self-sacrifice; a Divine sacrifice for our redemption. (3) What makes the home? Look into it again, and you see that the methods of the home contemplate and provide for the development of freedom. As of the home, so of all our life. He does not put us here as machines wound up to go in a certain prescribed way; He offers us the sovereignty of ourselves, and He Himself undertakes the task of training us in the use of such sovereignty; that is the meaning of temptation and difficulty, of desire and aspiration.—*J. Clifford.*

Sunday, 16th. Luke xii. 13-21.

Ver. 16. Why is this man called a "fool"? The epithet is a strong one. It is one the use of which Christ discouraged. It falls hot from the lips of Christ Himself. What is there in the conduct of this man to justify the use of such an opprobrious term?

This man is evidently what is known as a "successful man"; but surely, it does not follow that his folly lay in his success. Presumably, it is all due to his own forethought, diligence, and the prolific generosity of Mother Earth. There is nothing unworthy in any success that is well and wisely gained. Nor can we detect anything like folly, but something very like common sense and prudence, in the man's question, "What shall I do with my goods?" Nor do we perceive any particular folly in what he determined to do—"I will pull down my barns, and build greater."

There is one thing that is very noticeable in this man's mind and speech, and that is the utter absence of any idea of, or reference to, God. There is a popular saying, if it may be used here without vulgarity, "He reckoned without his host." The picture is a common one. It is the picture of a man whom prosperity has made *Godless*. There are two things a man may never forget; at least, if he do, God will not be slow in reminding him of them—the one is, that what he calls his own is not his, it has been lent him by God; and the other is, that what has been lent him by God is intended to be used for God.

This man has literally no sense of responsibility. But let no one go away, saying: "There is nothing here for me. I am none of your prosperous men, I have neither money nor goods 'laid up for many years!'" Hear me—Thou hast not this—Thou hast not that—*Thou hast a soul!*

and the night is upon us, and it might be required of thee—and then?—*J. Thew.*

Monday, 17th. Luke xii. 22-59.

Ver. 27. The lilies grow:

1. *Slowly.* So slowly that increase is only noticeable at considerable intervals. It is Nature's usual method. In the stalactite caves of Cheddar though the pendants and pillars are evidently in constant process of formation, there has been no appreciable lengthening or heightening for half a century. And as it is in the realm of the natural, so it is in the realm of the spiritual, *e.g.,* in our personal religious experience. So also in the work of the Church.

2. *Mysteriously.* "*How* they grow." But who knows how? So in all spiritual experiences and work. We must leave room for the mysterious and inscrutable.

3. *Under certain conditions.* Absence of sunlight and moisture, poverty of soil, or lack of gentle breezes, will cause the flower to droop and die. So in all spiritual matters; growth is conditional. Let the conditions be observed and strength with beauty of Christian character is secured. Under some conditions spiritual vigor is almost impossible. The Cashmir proverb says, "A fat man has no religion." In that quaint fashion we have but a version of "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."—*H. Windross.*

Beside the moist clods the slender flags arise, filled with the sweetness of the earth. Out of the darkness under the sod they have come to light. . . . . Yonder a steam plough pants up the hill groaning with its own strength, yet all that strength and might of wheels, and piston, and chains, cannot drag from the earth one single blade like these. Force cannot make it; it must grow. It is this mystery of growth and life, of beauty and sweetness and color, starting out of the clods, that gives the corn its power over me.—*Richard Jeffries.*

Tuesday, 18th. Luke xiii.

Ver. 24. What are the things against which men have to strive to enter God's kingdom?

That against which most people have to strive, if they would enter into life, is the pride of their own heart. There is no hindrance standing between more people and God than that of pride, and there is no sin which people are more anxious for others to think them guiltless of than pride. Therein lies its subtlety. How is pride manifested? Pride manifests itself in a refusal, first, to accept the Divine estimate of the heart's condition; and secondly, and consequently, pride manifests itself in a refusal to obey the first Divine injunction—"Repent."

There are those who will have to strive against false confidences. There are those who are trusting in their observance of law; those who are trusting in the fact that they have never openly broken the commandments of the Decalogue. There are those who are putting confidence in a profession of Christianity, putting confidence, moreover, in Christian service.

Many are being kept out of the kingdom by some false conception of God; many are being kept out of the kingdom by some doctrinal difficulty. To speak of the knowledge of God and of the counsel of God as a reason for your indifference and your continuing in sin, is to attempt to grasp within the compass of your finite mind infinite things which cannot be, and to disregard and disobey the tender, compassionate voice of the Omnipotent One Who calls you to personal, individual, immediate responsibility, and says to you—"Your business is to strive to enter in."

Someone else is not a Christian because he believes that if a man does his best, God is so good that He will save him. That is not true. And why not? Because a man is best when he is worthless. Because man's best in the sight of heaven is unholy.

Many are not Christians because they are afraid of the strife. People have said to me: "I would like to be a Christian, but I could not keep it. Once you have made a start you do not keep Christianity, Christianity keeps you. Strive to pass the narrow door, and beyond the place where it swings upon its portal, find the breadth and the magnificence, the sweetness and the light of God's kingship and comradeship with Christ.—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

Wednesday, 19th. Luke xiv. 1-24.

Ver. 13, 14. There are certain passages of Scripture which are condemned to suffer an almost perpetual martyrdom. It is not because they are either unimportant or hard to understand, but rather because they seemed to be pitched in too lofty and exacting a key. Among the number of these, the words selected above may well be reckoned. Christ's most exacting sayings are the most searching tests of our spiritual condition. They demand what nobody else thinks of demanding, and their claim upon our observance is drawn exclusively from His authority.

There can be no doubt that the course which Jesus here disapproves is the one that is still most generally followed. Indeed it is alarming to think on how thoroughly selfish a basis the friendships of this world rest. The bonds that draw people together are mainly of the most mercenary sort. Perhaps some will demur to this as a little extravagant and overdrawn. Well, you must see that you are not deceiving your-

selves, and shelving the real issue, because its serious consideration may prove unpleasant. There cannot be Christian society which has not a Christian object, or at least does not coincide with Christian aims. Let us, then, ask ourselves one or two questions. Do our social engagements contribute to the strength of our Christian character? Or, do they leave behind the exhaustion and weariness that succeed excitement? If so, how can you reconcile them with faithfulness to Christ? But it is not so much the excitement and dissipation of excessive social enjoyment which Christ condemns, as the calculating, sordid spirit which too often regulates its whole arrangement.

What, then, is it to which Christ exhorts us? In what direction does He bid us advance? He tells us that when we make a feast we are to call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and we shall be blessed. Then He adds as the reason, that they cannot recompense us again. Disengaging the truth which is taught us here from the particular connection in which it occurs, we find He inculcates that spirit of unselfishness which does not contemplate or seek for a present reward. But the principle receives its direct application in another and wider area. It inculcates the spirit of the good Samaritan, the doing of good for its own sake or rather for Christ's sake. It directs us to give where our gift is most required and will confer the largest amount of happiness.—*C. Moinet.*

Thursday, 20th. Luke xiv. 25-35.

Ver. 30. It is impossible to think of God creating man as we know him—that is to say, as we know ourselves—and allowing that man to end in nothingness. Here is man, as we know him, so abject, so august; he has thoughts, dreams, poems, philosophies, high purposes, noble ambitions, a heart that is like a golden fountain of love, and God made him so; and it is all going to end in smoke and nothingness! Never! God does not make men that He may mock them. God does not hang Himself up in His universe to be laughed at as the God Who began a man and built only his feet, could not reach his head, much less put a crown on the man whom He had created. This cannot be; the whole shuddering universe, appalled with his black blasphemy, says, No!

It is impossible to think of the Bible reducing all its own promises, oaths, assurances, consolations, to falsehood or mockery. Not perdition itself has fire hot enough to burn the book that has so misled us as the Bible has done if its oaths are lies and its promises are illusions. Man cannot be brought in that agony to regard the lying Bible as a mere effort in literature, the brightest and most exciting of the romances. The true heart has never read the Bible in that sense; the true heart has regarded the Bible as sent from God, written by God, pledging God to a ministry of love and redemption, or righteousness and judgment.

We are assured that there will be no failure on the part of God. Being confident, said the Apostle, the most heroic of all souls, that "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." "He that shall endure unto the end, ... shall be saved." There is sustenance on every mile of the road, there is comfort for every condition of life, there is ample preparation made for all the changes of the case; "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Be there when the crowns are given out!—*Joseph Parker.*

Friday, 21st. Luke xv. 1-7.

Ver. 6. In reply to the murmuring of the Pharisees the Saviour spake unto them this parable—a parable that is three and yet is one, as the artist sometimes tells his story in three panels each complete in itself, yet each finding its completeness in the others. In the first there is the lost sheep. The second panel is of a woman who has lost a piece of money—not much to many, perhaps, but very much to her. The third panel is of the prodigal son. We well may think of these three pictures as setting forth three types of character.

The first is the sheep—the silly sheep, that goes astray almost without meaning it or knowing it. Is it not the picture of thousands about us—souls not bad so much as weak and silly? May it not be that the Lord Jesus put these first because they are so common, and because it is so easy to turn away from them as if they were scarcely worth saving? There is nothing attractive about them, nothing hopeful. But does not love see in this their every need, their claim upon our help? About us are ten thousand men and women who can never get to heaven unless they are carried there on somebody's shoulder. Such people swarm about us: people without any resolution, without any strength of character.

The lost piece of money sets before us another type of character. Here it is not weakness that goes astray; you cannot blame the piece of money that it had gone down in the dirt, or got lost in the darkness. Somebody let it slip somehow; somebody's misfortune or carelessness, or sin brought it where it is. This is the picture of those who are damned by their circumstances.

The last is the prodigal son—type of him

who has deliberately gone astray, and must deliberately come back again—who will go on and therefore must go down, down until there comes the blessed want that brings him to his senses, that kindly hunger that prompts him to come home. The great lesson here is that at his coming there be no hard words, no cold suspicion, no harsh probation; but love, glad love, that runs and cries: "Bring forth the best robe; . . . . and bring hither the fatted calf," and that begins to be merry.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

Saturday, 22nd. Luke xv. 8-10.

Ver. 10. In the higher universe the true value of things is known, and this peep into glory is most instructive. We are taught the significance of the individual. "Over *one* sinner." It is often seen how Christ sets at nought the tyranny of numbers, and concentrates attention on the unit. Christ discovered humanity; there was no sense of the solidarity of the race before He came: yet He also discovered the individual, for there was no recognition of the value of the single soul before He came. One of the very foremost teachings of Jesus Christ declares the supreme worth of personality. The lowliest must not forget his mysterious greatness nor the fact that in the highest world his fortune is followed with impassioned interest.

A further lesson is that the importance of the individual lies in his moral life. "One *sinner.*" The heavenly universe is interested exclusively in the history of souls. How different with us! We survey life from an altogether different standpoint; and gold, culture, greatness, or pleasure is the consuming theme of our contemplation. If the celestial world is absorbed in the history of the soul, ought we not to concern ourselves far more than we usually do with the inner life?

The final lesson we note is that the most important event in the individual life is the restoration of the lapsed soul to God. "One sinner that *repenteth.*" He Who came into the world to resolve all our values declares that the return of the prodigal son to his Heavenly Father is the most momentous of all acts.

How vividly this narrative brings out the blessedness of repentance! God rejoices. "In the *presence* of the angels." The angels also rejoice. When the tide rises in the ocean, it rises in a thousand creeks and rivers; and when the sunny sea of God's blessedness swells, it streams through the celestial universe, and fresh music everywhere breaks out like the sound of many waters. But if repentance is an event to make heaven glad, is it not one to make us glad also?—*W. L. Watkinson.*

Sunday, 23rd. Luke xv. 11-17.

Ver. 17. I want to take the thought that the soul is homesick, and use it to shed a little light on the dark places. First, then, under this light we may view the unrest of sin. It is notable that it was in this light that Jesus viewed it, in this crowning parable. The prodigal was an exile; he was in a far country. It was the memory of his home that filled his heart. It was not terror that smote the prodigal deep. He came to himself and he was homesick. (1) Now I think that Jesus would have us learn from that that wickedness is not the homeland of the soul, and that all the unrest and the dissatisfaction of the wicked are just the craving of his heart for home. We were not fashioned to be at home in sin. The native air of this mysterious heart is the love and purity and joy of heaven. We shall always be dissatisfied, always be homesick, if we are trying to live in any other land. (2) This thought, too, helps us to understand why men cover evil with a veil of goodness. It is just the longing of the exile or of the emigrant to give a homelike touch to his surroundings. (3) And we can understand the loneliness of sin when we remember this homesickness of the soul. The man who is homesick is always lonely. Slowly but surely, if a man lives in sin he drifts apart into spiritual isolation.

Under this light we may view the craving for God. We often speak of heaven as our Home, and in many deep senses that is a true expression. But in deeper senses heaven is not our Home, or if it is, it is just because God is there. In the deepest sense our Home is not heaven, but God. Do you see, then, the meaning of that craving for God that is one of the strangest facts in human history? (1) We crave for God because He is our Home. (2) Now this homesickness of the soul for God is one of our surest proofs of God. It is an argument more powerful than any that philosophy affords to convince me that there is a God. Without a home, homesickness is inexplicable. My craving for God assures me that God is.—*G. H. Morrison.*

Monday, 24th. Luke xv. 18-24.

Ver. 22. God has no second best. For Himself and for us He will have no other than the best. He would have the best of everything and everything at the best. He is always putting upon things the best robe. God loves beauty. He is Himself the Author of all beauty and can only rest in things beautiful. How the Lord Jesus loved beauty! How He turned to the fowls of the air and the flower of the field and the little child, that He might illustrate and adorn His teaching, "Bring forth the best robe." It seems to be the voice of God in the summer, and the days are swift to obey the command of the Most High.

"Bring forth the best robe." To the very birds it seems to be spoken in the springtime. And now what think you? Is there not in all this a blessed message and promise for us men and women? For you and me it shall be spoken—"Bring forth the best robe." Let us see something of what this meant in the wonderful story that the Lord has given us. The prodigal has wandered into the far country and spent his substance in riotous living—has spent all. At last in his sorry plight he says, "I will arise and go to my father." And what then? "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, ... and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And . . . . the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." Nothing was too good for him.

"The best robe" is the beautiful picture of an utter and complete forgiveness. All that had been—the rags, the wretchedness, the poor, thin, wasted frame—are all covered and hidden by it. It is the very picture of what God's great love longs to do for us. "The best robe." Ah, what a costly robe it is! Who could count its worth? "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And lo, this best robe is for us if we will have it.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

Tuesday, 25th. Luke xv. 25-32.

Ver. 28. One of the first things to startle us about sins of temper is their strange compatibility with high moral character. The elder brother, without doubt, was a man of high principle. We have no criterion for estimating at their true worth men who figure as models of all the virtues. Everything depends on motive. The virtues may be real or only apparent, even as the vices may be real though not apparent. The fact that there are these two distinct sets of sins, and that few of us indulge both, but most of us indulge the one or the other, explains the compatibility of virtuous conduct with much unloveliness of disposition. Now it is this very association which makes sins of temper appear so harmless. We excuse the partial failure of our characters on the ground of their general success. Temper is the vice of the virtuous.

Look at the effects of ill temper. Note the influence of temper on the intellect. It has sometimes been taken for granted that a bad temper is a positive acquisition to the intellect. Its fieriness is supposed to communicate combustion to surrounding faculties, and to kindle the system into intense and vigorous life. The point, however, at which temper interferes with the intellect is in all matters of judgment. But it is in their moral and social effects that the chief evil lies. Society is an arrangement for producing and sustaining human happiness, and temper is an agent for thwarting and destroying it. In its ultimate nature distemper is a sin against love. A sin against love is a sin against God, for "God is love."

This tracing of the sin to its root now suggests this further topic—its *cure.* But is not temper a constitutional thing? Is it not hereditary, a family failing, a matter of temperament, and can that be cured? Yes, if there is anything in *Christianity.* All sins mar God's image, but sins of temper mar God's image and God's work and man's happiness.—*Henry Drummond.*

Wednesday, 26th. Luke xvi. 1-18.

Ver. 4. "I am resolved what to do." We are constantly face to face with the contrast which comes before us when we leave the house of God and go back to mix with the world, and to do our work; and we immediately feel its pressure. The spirit of the world makes it very difficult for us to hold that true proportion which should exist between the things which are seen and the things which are unseen.

The words of ver. 4 were put by our Lord into the lips of a thoroughly worldly man, with whom we come in contact in that well-known parable—the parable of the unjust steward. We want to remember, do we not, that our Lord's advice to us is just this: As you mingle with the world, as you come in contact with men who are living for the world, who have as their aim securing all that the world can give, caring little or nothing what may happen so long as they secure that, do not judge them, do not say hard things, do not forget that they, too, have been redeemed by the Saviour of the world, but try to learn from them a lesson which will help you in your struggle for your Christian freedom, and remember that if you are as true to your aims as they are to theirs, then you will go amongst your fellow men as saviours of society.

You and I must give an account of our stewardship; we must give an account of the way in which we have lived our life, and used our time, and our money, and our talents. Get time to think. Anticipate the account which you must give of your stewardship. I do not doubt for one moment that our hearts are stirred by the tender appeal of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; but have you let Him enter the great citadel of your will?

We may go forth and redeem the time, we may rejoice in being able to meet these temptations which conquered us of old, and in saying No where we once said Yes. Rise, for the day is passing. Yes; and a place in the ranks awaits us. Each has his part to play, and the past and the future are nothing in the stern face of to-day. And "he that shall endure unto the end, the

same shall be saved," and the great Captain of our salvation will also have His word of commendation to those who endure to the end. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; . . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord."—*Selected.*

Thursday, 27th. Luke xvi. 19-31.

Ver. 24. The parable teaches, first, that if we dedicate our lives to the good things of this world, we shall forfeit the good things of the next. This is written in broad and deep lines throughout the picture, and if this is not intended as a serious truth, then the whole parable is a mischief and a snare. Earthly greatness gives no warrant of heavenly greatness. We may most truly possess the present life by living for the next, but we cannot gain a drop of cold water in the next by living for this. If we store up our good things in this life, death will make us bankrupt. This is the unchanging law of righteousness.

The lesson goes still further, and teaches that self-gratification in this life will be followed by the retribution of anguish in the next. The subtle explanation of future pain as being nothing more than the gnawings of the sinner's conscience—an evasion intended to deny the direct infliction of retribution by the hand of God—will certainly not satisfy the picture given in this parable. The rich man has entered into a state and into circumstances in which pain is inflicted upon him. The retribution of our sin is not left to our own conscience in this life. Why, then, should we imagine that it will receive no direct punishment in the life to come? What, then, will be the form which such retribution will take? Thank God, I do not know. It is enough to know that the God of love is a consuming fire to the ungodly. Terrible is He in righteousness. Let us, therefore, fear Him.

The parable further teaches that the most unhonored condition of earthly life cannot exclude from the most honorable status in the heavenly life. Poverty and affliction on earth are not a sign of God's displeasure.

The parable, again, emphasizes the genuine continuity of this life with the next. The life beyond death will be related to the life here with as perfect continuity as our life to-day is related to that of yesterday. Continuity is also taught here in the form of immediateness. Jesus here teaches that judgment and reward begin immediately after death. It is true that the consummation of penalty and reward cannot come till the completion of His kingdom, but the beginnings do not tarry.—*John Thomas.*

Friday, 28th. Luke xvii. 1-10.

Ver. 6. It is not the quantity of faith, but the quality, which is important. A grain of mustard seed and a pellet of dust may appear at a distance to be much the same, but the difference between the two is immense, because the one has no life burning at the heart of it, whilst the other contains life as God kindled it. The one thing that you need is to have faith, as small as you like, but faith which has in it the principle of life, namely, faith with God in it. The one thing that shows whether or not your faith is of the right quality is whether it is directed towards the right object, which is Jesus Christ.

Your faith is like the tiny grain. You think you will never be able to produce a holy and useful life. But if only your soul can come into living union with the eternal God, there is nothing that He will not be able to effect by your instrumentality. There are five processes. (1) There must be contact. As long as you are apart from God, though trying to serve God in a strange anomaly, you are missing the true power of your life. (2) There must be soltitude. (3) There must be death. (4) Receptivity. There is simply nothing impossible to the man who has learned the art of being a channel for God. (5) Individuality. The mustard seed produces mustard growth; the grain of wheat, wheat growth; the acorn, oak growth. George Müller lets God into his soul, and Ashley Down is covered with orphan houses. Spurgeon lets God into his soul, and you have the Tabernacle, and volumes of Sermons, and the orphan house, and Pastors' College.—*F. B. Meyer.*

Saturday, 29th. Luke xvii. 11-37.

Ver. 32. This picture, etched so sharply on the Bible page, may well help to illustrate for us truths that should be burned into our minds and our memories.

Note, first, that *God saves all He can.* For Lot was not saved alone, in mercy that overlooked all others beside. His wife's deliverance had been cared for, too, and measures taken to secure her with the rest. One of the angels clasped her hand and drew her out of the conflagration by main force. Almost against her will she was hurried so far out of danger, and the mountain road, with its hastening fugitives, stretched out clear before her, when, in that one glance behind, her incurably corrupt nature came out, and the stroke fell. In other words, she was nearly saved, and would have been wholly saved had that heavenly rescue party had their will.

Note, secondly, how *men hanker after old sins.* That was the fatal flaw in this instance; and how frequently it shadows lives full of promise in the Bible! Recall some of the more prominent examples. Rachel becomes the wife of Jacob, and like him engages thereby to worship the one

true God; but when she leaves her home the old idols are packed away in the baggage. The Israelites acclaim Moses as leader, and promise obedience, and set out eagerly for the desert; but the Red Sea is hardly out of sight before they are weeping for the fleshpots of Egypt, and ready to stone their deliverer. And when we cross over to the New Testament, there is the career of Demas—first feeling the strange attraction of the Gospel and waiting upon St. Paul as a familiar friend, then recaptured by the old fascination and plunging back into the world. It is a weakness all too common, this craving lust for earlier self-indulgence; and it suggests that Christ spoke to every human soul when He uttered the solemn words: "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Lastly, note how *sin can be committed in desire.* At first sight, perhaps, one might suppose this woman had been dealt with very hardly; and we are tempted to say that the punishment was out of all proportion to the crime. 'But, if we feel that, it is because we fail to realize all that her longing glance implied. It was a clear proof that, if she could, she would have turned back to her old haunts; and that, indeed, so far as will and choice were concerned, she had turned back already. So there are instances where God cannot but take the will for the deed.—*H. R. Mackintosh.*

Sunday, 30th. Luke xviii.

Ver. 35. Here is a sight to move our pity. Blind and begging, either were bad enough, but sad is it indeed for him who carries a double burden, of darkness and of want. And nigh unto Jericho, too. "The city of fragrance, the city of roses, the city of palm trees, the paradise of God," as one has called it. In this blaze of light and beauty sits a blind beggar! Why does God let there be any blind beggars? He is kind. He is almighty. Why is there any want and sorrow? Well, as in everything else, there are two sides to this matter of blind beggars. Here comes a man anxious and careworn, counting up his gains, and fretting within himself that he made no more by his last venture. "Listen to the birds," says the blind man, "they do sing sweetly; I love to hear them. And how the scent of roses fills the air to-day!" But turn to the merchant again. He is looking at nothing but the ground, and without so much as seeing that. Pity the poor blind indeed! Which is the blind man, the beggar by the wayside, or the man who has eyes and sees not, and ears but hears not, and a nose has he but he smells not? "Oh, he is rich," you say. No, no, he is the poor man. Pity him. Now, startling the business man in the midst of his fretting, comes the voice of the blind. "Poor fellow," he mutters to himself, "here I have been worrying about a bad debt; and after all I have enough left and to spare"—and he stops to give the blind beggar an alms. "Well, if it is a mercy to have one's eyes," he says, as he goes on his way, "how much I have to be thankful for!" And presently he looks up, "Really, what a beautiful day it is! And these birds, how they do sing! Well, well, that *is* music. And—yes, really the air is wonderfully sweet and fragrant with the flowers." Oh, wonderful blind beggar, thou hast opened a blind man's eyes to his mercies, and unstopped his ears to God's music, and given to him the faculty to smell the sweetness of God's earth. Want and woe, suffering and sorrow, are God's angels of mercy to us—to us who think ourselves rich and increased in goods and in need of nothing.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*

Monday, 31st. Luke xix.

Ver. 2. We do not know much about Zacchæus, but every word graphically sets forth his character. The first thing I see in the man is the advantage of disadvantage. He is short of stature. But do you see how he makes up in energy and determination for what he lacks in size? He *ran before.* He climbed up into the tree. And when Jesus calls him "he *made haste,* and came down, and received him joyfully." Notice how he turns his disadvantages to such good account. He climbs up into a tree, and then he sees over everybody's head. And look at the advantage of his disadvantage here, too. Because he had such a bad name, it does not matter what he did. Great are the advantages of disadvantages. Are not the world's great men most often those who have had to overcome all kinds of disadvantages? It was the overcoming of the disadvantages that was the beginning of their greatness. There is always a tree waiting for Zacchæus—always the advantage to balance the disadvantage—somewhere and somehow. We are all of us short in something.

Look at what others saw in Zacchæus, and what Jesus saw. Others saw the publican—the coarse and common publican. There are thousands to-day in his place. It is the doubt and scorn of other people that make it so hard to be good; the Herods who, with cruel contempt and breath of bitterness, do slay the better life within men. But let us see what Jesus sees. His eyes pass over the sea of faces until they rest upon this man. The blessed Master looked and saw it all—the love that lay beneath, the longings unfulfilled, the sorrow that seemed to look out as if from prison bars. This is the glory of Jesus Christ. This is the Gospel. By kindly recognition of the good within us He transforms us.—*Mark Guy Pearse.*